

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF
SARAH, LADY LYTTELTON





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CORRESPONDENCE OF
SARAH SPENCER, LADY LYTTELTON

FIRST EDITION	<i>October, 1912</i>
SECOND EDITION	<i>October, 1912</i>
THIRD EDITION	<i>November, 1912</i>
FOURTH EDITION	<i>November, 1912</i>
<i>Reprinted</i>	<i>December, 1912</i>



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NEW SHOES!

SARAH, LADY LYTTELTON AS A CHILD.

From a drawing by her mother.

CORRESPONDENCE
OF SARAH SPENCER
LADY LYTTELTON

1787—1870

EDITED BY HER GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER
THE HON. MRS. HUGH WYNDHAM

WITH PORTRAITS

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INTRODUCTION

THESE letters, with a few exceptions, were written by Sarah Spencer, afterwards Lady Lyttelton. They begin in the early days of the nineteenth century, and stretch over a period of nearly seventy years. To a large number of friends and relations her letters always had much charm, and it is thought that a selection from them might be of interest to a wider circle, describing as they do many of the notable events and people of that day. She was elder daughter of George John, second Earl Spencer, by his wife Lavinia Bingham, eldest daughter of the first Earl of Lucan. Lord Spencer was a man of peculiar personal charm, a keen sportsman, and a collector of rare books,¹ and his kindness, simplicity and enjoyment of life made him beloved by all who knew him. It will be seen in the letters how the happiness of the home circle centred in him, though among strangers his manner was reserved. Gibbon, with the dignity of one accustomed to portray the character of Emperors, wrote of Lord Spencer: "He is a valuable man, and, when he is familiar, a pleasant companion." In politics, though he belonged to the "Old Whig" school, Lord Spencer

¹ It was he who formed the celebrated Althorp Library, the history of which is told in Dibdin's "*Bibliotheca Spenceriana*," and which now forms the nucleus of the Rylands Library in Manchester.

had been a close adherent of Pitt, under whom he held office as First Lord of the Admiralty during the brilliant naval campaigns of the last years of the eighteenth century. His daughter used to describe how she one day rushed with her mother into Lord Spencer's room at the Admiralty, having heard rumours of a great victory, and they found him in a dead faint on the floor, with the despatches from Nelson announcing the Battle of the Nile clasped in his hand. After the death of Pitt, Lord Spencer held office in the short-lived Coalition Ministry of "All the Talents," with Lord Grenville at the head; but when the Tories acceded to power, he retired into opposition and private life.

Lavinia, Lady Spencer, had been a beauty in her youth, and her portraits by Sir Joshua are well known. She was married in 1781, and a few years later Gibbon described her as "a charming woman, who with sense and spirit has the wit and simplicity of a child." And Dr. Burney wrote about the same time, "The young Lady Spencer and I are become very thick. I have dined with her at Lady Lucan's and met her at the blue parties there. She is a pleasant, lively and comical creature, with more talents and discernment than are expected from a character so *folâtre*." Lady Spencer enjoyed society, and particularly that of interesting people, but as she grew older she became rather formidable, and she was by many thought haughty and exclusive. Extremely intolerant and a fiery partisan, her parties consisted chiefly of her family and a small set of chosen friends; but an occasional "lion" in the literary or scientific world, and, above all, a distinguished sailor, were always welcome. In later years she hated a Tory with a

deep hate, but in the days when her husband was a member of a Tory Government she received them, and had no intercourse with the “New Whig” party, of which Fox and Sheridan were the leaders, and Lord Spencer’s sister Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, was the bright, particular star. So keen was the party feeling that for some years the two ladies never visited each other.

Lady Spencer’s language was as strong as her opinions. “I do not like my Aunt Spencer,” observed one of her nieces. “I object to being called ‘Dear Devil’ when she is in a good temper, and sworn at when she is not.” On the other hand, she was warm-hearted and generous, and a firm friend. “Never was there a more zealous and steady friend,” wrote Lord Brougham, “and I should not have advised anyone to whisper a word against a person she was attached to. In return, the friendships she inspired were deep and lasting.” Lady Spencer drew very cleverly; a few of her caricatures are reproduced in this book, and some of her more ambitious efforts were engraved by Bartolozzi.¹ She had a low, deep voice, and a laugh of exquisite charm. Her husband was devoted to her, and she to him, and when she died in 1831 he never got over her loss. She was an affectionate, if exacting, mother, very ambitious for her children, preferring rather too obviously the successful ones; and though in later years they became rather irked by her tyrannical temper, and she inspired them with awe rather than affection, yet she exercised considerable influence over their careers. This can be traced in the letters and in the lives of her four sons.

¹ Among them two charming little pictures of Lady Sarah as a child, entitled “New Shoes” and “Nice Supper.”

Lord Althorp,¹ the eldest, who had been first taught his alphabet by Lady Spencer's Swiss footman, and had been allowed to devote himself, nearly all his boyhood, to dogs and horses, was very much astonished, when about to return to Cambridge for his second term, by his mother saying, "Jack, we expect you to take honours." He immediately sold all his hunters, applied himself to study, and acquitted himself creditably in examinations. Afterwards he went into Parliament, though politics were always distasteful to him, simply because it was expected of him. His tastes through life were those of a country gentleman; he was devoid of personal ambition, his figure was clumsy, and his manners were shy and awkward; but by his high character and strong common sense he made for himself a lasting name in the history of his time.

Robert, the second son, born 1791, was put into the navy, which, according to his sister he at first very much disliked. He was the favourite of the family, full of social charm and of *la joie de vivre*. He became a distinguished naval officer, and eventually an Admiral. Though he had a large heart and was often in love, he never married. Frederick, the third son, born in 1798, followed his brother into the navy, though at first he was destined to be a soldier. He also became an Admiral, and in middle life succeeded to the Earldom. The youngest brother, George, born in 1799, a quiet, studious youth, was bidden to take Orders and step into the family living.

¹ John Charles Viscount Althorp (1782-1845), Chancellor of the Exchequer in Lord Grey's Government, which brought in and carried the Reform Bill of 1832. Succeeded as third Earl Spencer, 1834, when he retired finally from politics, and lived in the country till his death. In 1814 he married Miss Esther Acklom, who died without children in 1818.

This he duly did, though afterwards, to the horror of his family, he seceded to the Church of Rome. He has left on record how some trenchant words from his mother recalled him to the studies he had been tempted to leave for a course of shooting and hunt balls. There was, besides Lady Sarah, a younger sister, Georgiana, born in 1794, a pretty, attractive girl, full of character, but who lived in terror of her mother. She married Lord George Quin in 1814, and died in 1823.

A biographical sketch of the Spencer family at this date would be incomplete without mention of Lady Sarah's grandmothers, the Dowager Ladies Spencer and Lucan. Georgiana Lady Spencer, after her husband's death in 1781, retired from the world and devoted her life to good works. She was largely responsible for the first introduction of Sunday-schools. Miss Burney describes a charity school supported by Lady Spencer, and says that she was rather too obviously pleased with herself for so doing. Her grandson, Lord Althorp, who never liked her, partly, he says, because his mother disliked her, wrote of her many years later in a fragment of an autobiography which he began : "She was a woman who did not possess naturally any quickness of understanding, nor do I think that she possessed sterling good sense ; but she had taken great pains with herself, had read a great deal, and though herself far from brilliant in conversation, had lived in the society of clever people. This gave her a reputation for ability to which she was not entitled. The vanity which influences all mankind influenced her."

Margaret, Lady Lucan, was a very different person ; a tiny irresponsible little being, full of charm and wit.

INTRODUCTION

In her early days she had held a salon in London and ranked among the blue-stockings of the previous century. Horace Walpole said of one of her parties, "It was so blue, it was quite mazarine blue." She is thus described by Mrs. Calvert in "An Irish Beauty of the Regency": "Lady Lucan is a very agreeable old woman, not a woman I could either love or esteem, though she has always been strictly virtuous. She is insincere, violent, satirical, and odd-tempered ; but she is uncommonly agreeable—a great deal of wit, information, and words at command. She dresses in a style of her own, and looks so like a little old witch that you can't help looking for her broomstick." This not very lovable picture is probably a little exaggerated, for whenever she is mentioned in the letters it is with affection ; but the resemblance to her daughter is such that there must be a good deal of truth in it. Lady Spencer also inherited her mother's gift for drawing and her command of language. Lady Lucan lived in St. James's Place with her unmarried daughter, Anne, who was Lady Sarah's greatest friend, and not many years her senior. She was always called "Nan" or "Nanette," and, according to the letters and a few of her own still existing, was a charming person. She was very highly strung and her manner was very nervous. Lady Sarah remembered overhearing a scrap of conversation between Mrs. Siddons and her aunt, and being much diverted by the contrast between them, the Queen of Tragedy in her sonorous and measured tones demanding, "And of what are they made ?" and Lady Anne's reply, given with indescribable rapidity, "Coarse calico."

We now come to the chief subject of this memoir, Sarah Spencer, born on July 29, 1787, and therefore at

the time the letters begin, in 1804, she was seventeen years old. There are few records of her earliest youth, but to the end of her life she had a clear recollection of the great Mr. Gibbon, who spent the Christmas before he died at Althorp, when Lady Sarah was but six years old. His immense bulk impressed her childish fancy, and she always said he gave her her first lesson in arithmetic, asking her questions out of the multiplication table as she played about the room. She grew up to be as accomplished and soundly educated as befitted so auspicious a beginning. She had a strong sense of humour, and much of her mother's satirical wit, but with a far gentler and more considerate disposition. She was thus described by Mrs. Calvert at her first ball, given by her mother: "Lady Sarah is not good-looking, but has an interesting pleasing countenance, a good figure, and sweet unaffected manners." The mainstay of the family life, Lady Sarah was deeply attached to her brothers and sister, who found in her (the younger ones especially) the tender affection they missed in their mother. Lord Althorp she held in much respect to the end of his life. He was "my brother" *par excellenee*, and his advice was habitually deferred to; but it was Bob, the brother next her in age, who was her best beloved, as is shown by her long and open-hearted correspondence with him. The letters to him begin in 1808, when he was a midshipman of sixteen on board H.M.S. *Tigre*. She wrote to him, almost daily, letters full of news, political, social, and family gossip. She advised him about his friends and the books he was to read. They give a vivid picture of the life of the period, the leisurely sheltered life of women, how it was impossible for two healthy young ladies to walk along a

country road unescorted by a “beau” and “a manly arm” to lean upon, or of climbing a ladder “for fear of breaking or shewing our legs.” Lady Spencer and her daughters did a certain amount of “good works” among the poor of the villages round Althorp, Sunday-school teaching, and instruction in straw-plaiting and “satin-stitch,” whatever that may be; but otherwise they usually remained at home with books and needlework, while the men of the family hunted, shot, and visited, or were engaged in politics; and through all these early letters one hears the roar of the guns of Napoleon, and can imagine a little the terror he inspired, when by every post came news of his fresh victories.

For four years the correspondence with her brother continued without a break. Then in 1812 Lady Sarah’s future husband, Mr. Lyttelton, appeared on the scene. Of the same age as Lord Althorp,¹ he was as unlike him as possible. A brilliant scholar, very handsome, dark, and possessed of tearing spirits, he broke in upon the rather formal life at Althorp with a quite unprecedented *abandon* of fun and wit. His French blood accounted for his looks and vivacity, and caused him as a young man to be nicknamed “le jeune Languedoçien.” Lady Sarah’s announcement of his intended visit shows that it was quite unexpected, and she thought it rather surprising and interesting to meet a “London beau” in the country. The truth was, that Mr. Lyttelton had been very unhappy at being refused by some lady, and confided his woes to Lady Hood, who was often mentioned in the letters,

¹ William Henry, afterwards third Lord Lyttelton, born 1782, died 1837. His father was brother of George, first Lord Lyttelton, and married as his second wife Caroline Bristow, whose mother had been a Mlle. Foissin, daughter of a French wine merchant.

and she advised him to marry Lady Sarah Spencer, saying, "I know she likes you, and I am sure she would do it;" so he proposed himself to Ryde, where the Spencers had a house. The result was that he fell in love with Lady Sarah and she with him, and they were married in the following March, 1813. Unfortunately, as she destroyed, after his death, all her own letters to her husband, there is but a rather scanty correspondence during their married life to choose from; but the marriage was one of perfect happiness, only clouded in later years by Lord Lyttelton's¹ prolonged ill-health. At the time of his marriage, and for some years afterwards, he was in Parliament, and the letters during these years are all full of the fight for Reform, culminating in the pitched battles over the first Reform Bill of 1832.

Lady Lyttelton's married life was for the most part peacefully occupied with the care and upbringing of her five children, as she never cared for society. "You cannot think how worthy the place is of the poet and Lucy Fortescue," wrote a lady from Hagley in 1830. "Lady Lyttelton has that delightful manner that makes you feel intimate directly, very agreeable; and the good that is appearing in her conversation and in all that she does, and everything, gives one a feeling of real excellence in a rather old-fashioned way." In 1838, a year after her husband's death, she became Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Victoria, then in the second year of her reign, and in 1842 Lady Lyttelton was made governess to the royal children. She held that post for nine years, and it imposed on her heavy responsibilities. Throughout these onerous years she enjoyed the confidence of the Queen and Prince Albert,

¹ He succeeded to the title on the death of his half-brother in 1828.

who consulted her about everything concerning the children, and she was deeply touched by their unvarying kindness to her. She was devoted to the royal children, and as long as she lived "Laddle" (their pet name for her) was lovingly remembered by the three eldest. Her letters from Court tell chiefly of the simple and happy family life, with accounts of the children, and, above all, of the wonderful promise of the Princess Royal, besides many portraits and descriptions of the interesting people who came and the various Court pageants she witnessed.

In December, 1850, Lady Lyttelton resigned her place at Court, and thenceforward spent her life either in London or the country among her many relations. It is difficult to convey to those who never knew her the especial charm of her presence and the sympathy and old-world graciousness of her manner.

At Hagley her grandsons and granddaughters alike found "Granny's room" a beloved centre of home-life. There, before five o'clock tea had become an institution, it was to be found, and this was a sociable time for dropping in with any piece of news or family gossip, or reading aloud, which was one of her special gifts. Her interest in her grandsons and their pursuits was great, though it must be admitted that she never mastered so much as the rudiments of cricket, and viewed that noble game, and indeed all forms of athletics, with some dread and trepidation.

Throughout her life religion was her strength and stay, and this, and what her son George called "her far-reaching power of intensely loving," made her a true comforter in times of mourning. There are many allusions in her later letters to the Oxford Movement, which, as will be seen, caused her considerable

alarm ; but her eldest son and many of her family were deeply influenced by the High Church revival, and in her old age she learnt to value Church practices and services which formerly would not have entered into her wildest dreams. She even became reconciled to open seats in church, though she once said she loved best a corner of a high pew shut away from all sights and sounds except the voice of the officiating clergyman ; and truth compels us to add that, though she obediently attended Lenten services, she used to inquire why she might not repent of her sins in August.

Her old age was marked by ever-increasing serenity and peace. Six months before her death she decided to end her days at Hagley, and until the last few weeks of her life she suffered no pain, and her children and grandchildren had much happy intercourse with her. In the words of her eldest son, “She was spared to see the children of her children’s children, and was allowed to depart with the sunshine of hope and happiness resting on those she loved. So ends a life full of blessings given and received.”

Sarah Lady Lyttelton died on April 13, 1870, aged eighty-two.

LUCY C. F. CAVENDISH.
MAUD WYNDHAM.

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THE CORRESPONDENCE OF LADY SARAH SPENCER

CHAPTER I

1804-1808

THE letters comprised in this chapter, written between June, 1804, when Lady Sarah was seventeen years of age, and October, 1808, were addressed in part to her grandmother, the Dowager Lady Spencer,¹ in part to her favourite brother, "Bob," who as midshipman had just joined H.M.S. *Tigre*. Wimbledon House, where the first letter of the series was written, and which is frequently mentioned in the correspondence, was sold by Lord Spencer in 1846. The house still stands, but the park, described by Swift as one of the finest near London, has long since been broken up into innumerable villa sites.

To the Dowager Countess Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
June 8, 1804.

... Pray, dear Grandmama, will you ask John Warde if he has ordered the apiary Mama spoke to him about? We are to have a *bee farm* here, and when I have learned the management of bees I mean to bring the old women of Brington to have some. They say bees will pay the rent of a cottage at any time, and now the girls of Brington are going on so

¹ Mary Georgiana, the eldest daughter of Stephen Poyntz, Esq., of Midgham, Berks. She married the first Earl Spencer in 1755, and died in 1814.

well—oh, so nicely!—with the straw work, I mean to set about the old gentlewomen and see what I can make of them. Do you know, all the girls there between eight and fourteen work at the straw work, and they begin at their cottage doors at five in the morning; some of them make two score a week; and there is a straw school, and everything delightful. My aunt and I are joint directors, and Mr. Wolfe the agent, and a man at Dunstable the buyer. . . .

In May, 1805, Lady Sarah was presented to Queen Charlotte.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE,
May 17, 1805.

MY DEAR GRANDMAMA,—I take the earliest opportunity to answer your inquiries about the ceremony, which, thank Heaven, I may now say is over, and even better over than I expected, for I did not quite knock the Queen down, nor is Mama made ill by the fuss; both of which things I had made up my mind would happen, of course. As to my dress and reception, I will describe them, as you desire it, though the former is not very well worth while, and the latter I cannot say I recollect very much about; the little sense I had left at that moment being entirely taken up with keeping the crowd behind me from pushing me on the Queen's nose, and with making my curtsey low enough. I was dressed in white crape train and petticoat, with silver embroidery on the sleeves and round my waist, and on my head a very pretty bandeau of diamonds and five white feathers. The bandeau was Mama's own pattern; she drew it herself. We got there a little before my Aunt Devonshire,¹ who was so kind as to come with us, so we had time to sit down and rest before we went into the inner room, which was a good thing for Mama particularly. When we were all assembled, in we went, in such a crowd, we were like a pack of cards, one leaning on the other, till we got near the Queen; then the crowd opened, the Queen put out her cheek and I kissed it, and then made a curtsey. She was very gracious, and said, I believe, something about

¹ Georgiana, the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, died the following year.

being glad to see Mama being so well and something about my being grown. But, as I said before, I really am not perfectly clear about it. All the Princesses were likewise very gracious, and spoke either to me or Mama ; but I fear they must have thought me dumb, for I don't think I ever attempted an answer. However, I certainly was not half so much tired as I had expected to be, for, till I came in sight of the Queen, I was perfectly comfortable and not at all frightened. Now, dear Grandmama, I have given you quite enough of my presentation, so good-bye. . . .

In the early part of the last century breakfasts, especially in the large suburban houses, were one of the most fashionable modes of social entertainment.

SPENCER HOUSE,
July 6, 1807.

. . . I will attempt to describe all that happened on Saturday. The first question we all of us asked as soon as we waked was, "Is it fair?" as, after the agony we had suffered in watching the "doubling vapours sail along the sky" and the weather grow more and more lowering as the day drew nearer, our anxiety was really beyond expression. For as we asked I fancy near eight hundred people, what could have been done with them indoors ? The morning, however, was tolerable, but it began raining violently just as people began to come, at two o'clock. This, however, did us good ; the rest of the day was warm, clear, and yet not too hot—in short, perfect. Very few people arrived before three, but when they did come it was the prettiest sight I ever saw, I think. The numbers of people dressed in brilliant colours, wandering about under trees and on the lawn and in the portico, the sound of the different bands of music, the extreme beauty of the place, which had put on its best looks, the profusion of roses and pinks in every part of the house and about it, and the sincere pleasure one saw in every countenance, made it quite a delightful thing. Every creature was, I believe, equally delighted with it ; nobody left us till six or seven o'clock, and all were not gone till nine. Harriet¹ and

¹ Lady Henrietta Cavendish, daughter of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire ; afterwards wife of the first Earl Granville.

I went about for some time in vain, but at last with success, to make people dance. They did begin at about four ; this added greatly to the beauty of the spectacle. While we were watching the country-dances on the west side of the house, the Duke of Cambridge and Lady Charlotte Campbell and two more people began waltzing on the other, to the great admiration of everybody. They all said it was a beautiful thing, they both danced so well, and the military band accompanied them so beautifully. I regret extremely not having seen this part of the fête. I don't think I can describe any details of dress to you ; there was none very striking, but all looked excessively gay—pink, yellow, or lilac mantles or drapery over white gowns, and light straw hats or lace caps, were most the fashion. Some people looked very well, but several don't bear the daylight well, and one could hardly believe they were the same as one had admired at night. The equipages I refer you to the enclosed for an account of. I despair of doing them justice, particularly as the post is going.

ALTHORP,

August 3, 1807.

. . . I am very busy just now in the village teaching some girls to work satin stitch. Do you know what that means ? I dare say not. But, however, it is a very fashionable work just now to wear, and has an immense sale in London, which the plait has not, as this summer people think it right to wear silk and not straw bonnets. Some of my girls work rather better than me already, and I dare say will soon cut a figure ; they are extremely neat and clean. The Sunday-school goes on flourishingly ; Gin and I are always there before it begins, and, except a few bead necklaces and long, greasy locks of hair, I have no fault to find.

Mr. Thomas William Coke, whose house is here described, was one of the pioneers of scientific farming in England. When he succeeded to the property of Holkham, it was given up mainly to rabbits and sheep, but by his wise administration and expenditure he turned it into wheat land and raised the annual renta

value from £2,000 to £20,000. He was created Earl of Leicester in 1837, and died in 1842.

To the Dowager Lady Spencer.

DOWNHAM,

December 16, 1807.

. . . The place (Holkham) is much the most magnificent I ever saw, and the rooms are all equally inhabited, and therefore very warm and really comfortable ; and Lady Anson¹ is a very pleasant person to have made acquaintance with. . . . She performs all the duties of a daughter, a wife, a mother, and a mistress of a family quite to perfection, and is at the same time so totally unaffected, good-humoured, and without parade, that it is impossible not to feel the truest admiration and respect for her. Besides this, she contrives to *do the honours* in a way so easy to her guests that she even satisfied me, who am very difficult to satisfy on that head. Every person at Holkham did exactly what they chose all day, and you might go out, stay at home, sit in your room or in society, work, read, or do nothing without any inquiries or pressings or even proposals being made you by the lady of the house, of whose control one is, I think, always more jealous than of any other in the world. . . . Mr. Windham² was there, whose conversation I could live upon for any length of time ; it is quite perfection ; but he staid only one night.

To Earl Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,

January 2, 1808.

. . . Lord Glastonbury³ is in town grumbling as usual, but he quite approves of the Copenhagen business, and says Lord G. L. Gower had got possession (for £20,000) of the original treaty of Tilsit, and that

¹ Daughter of "Tom Coke" of Norfolk.

² William Windham (1750-1810), who was Secretary at War under Pitt, and again under the Ministry of "All the Talents"; friend of Burke and Johnson.

³ Son of the Right Hon. James Grenville ; he was created Baron Glastonbury, but the title became extinct on his death, in 1825.

one of the secret articles stipulated that the Danish fleet should be employed against us, which induced Ministers to adopt such vigorous measures. . . .

The Treaty of Tilsit was signed by Napoleon and the Czar Alexander I. on a raft in the middle of the River Niemen in July, 1807. The vigorous measures were that Canning, then at the War Office, sent an army and ships to Denmark, which bombarded Copenhagen and brought away the Danish fleet, though England was not at war with Denmark.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
February 29, 1808.

. . . Well, now I must inform you that our two great dinners are over; our own on Saturday went off famously, everybody was in very good humour, talked away, and made themselves agreeable, *on ne peut pas mieux*. When it was over I repeated to myself what I often have thought, that a dinner is, to me, the pleasantest device London affords for bringing people together in a room. I can't say I repeated it yesterday. For what with the bustle of going out, not knowing who you were to meet, then meeting people half of them one way and half the other in politicks, and seeing them all at dinner dying to talk of this debate and that debate, and not daring, for fear of throwing all their neighbours' fat into the fire, made it a most formal piece of work; and several of the company, whom in general I think very pleasant people, were so flattened and dulled by this restraint as to be quite stupid. I suppose all this time you recollect it was at Lord Camden's.¹

Mama and I are to go to the Argyle Street Assembly² to-night. Vague hints are circulated that one shall

¹ John Jeffreys, second Earl and first Marquis Camden. He married Frances, daughter of William Molesworth, and first cousin of Lady Spencer.

² The Argyle Street Assemblies were managed, like Almack's, by a committee of lady patronesses.

have to dance there ; I own I am quite old enough to have preferred walking about and talking ; but, however, that is *entre nous* ; no creature allows it possible or right not to be enthusiastically fond of being dragged up and down the middle, of figuring in and casting out like a parcel of mad idiots let loose, till you are dead, which event happens to me after getting down three couple in general. After all it is just possible that I may be a piteous partnerless person all night, so I need not be making all these pathetic lamentations beforehand.

SPENCER HOUSE,
April 7, 1808.

A thousand thanks, my dearest Bob, for your most cheering letter. . . . I will certainly give you as correct an account as I can of our evening pastimes, though the dull sameness of them makes me almost wonder you should wish for one. To-night we go to Caroline Lamb's, and it is very particularly against my wish for many reasons. First because I know it will, must, be a very ill-managed, strange, dull party ; but chiefly because it will prevent us from accompanying the children to the play, where Papa is going to take them, and where their surprize and delight would have amused me much more than the numerous conversations I shall hold about the shape and size of Caro's rooms, the heat of the weather, the crowd of the doorway, and all such interesting topicks.

I am to-day in a state of great vanity, and for a cause which I am sure you will never guess, now try. I have neither refused any grand proposal, nor received any well-turned compliment, nor overheard any flattering conversation ; but I have, to my eternal glory be it spoken, made a pair of shoes. There is for you ! So if all other trades fail, I shall certainly establish myself cross-legged at the corner of an alley, to earn a stinking livelihood in the middle of leather, awls and hammers. . . .

The famous and eccentric Lady Caroline Lamb was the daughter of the third Earl of Bessborough, and her mother was sister to Lord Spencer. She is the original of Mrs. Lorraine in Disraeli's "Vivian Grey," and ap-

peared in many other novels of her day. She wrote one herself, "Glenarvon," of which she made Lord Byron the hero. She is chiefly remembered by her love-affair with him, and years after, the shock of meeting his funeral cortège in a country lane on its way to Newstead, nearly unhinged her mind. In 1805 she married William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne and Prime Minister, and died in 1828. They lived at Melbourne House in Whitehall, which is now the Scotch Office. Miss Berry describes this party in her diary, April 7, 1808: "I went to Lady Caroline Lamb's. We came away at half-past twelve and walked beyond the Admiralty to the carriage. Many of the company were not away till near three, and the Prince of Wales and a few persons supped below stairs in Lady Melbourne's apartment, and were not gone before six. Sheridan of the number, who was completely drunk."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
April 21, 1808.

. . . Your question about the number of chapters pleased me too extremely, my dear Bob, first because I saw by it that you had been struck by something I once said to you (and who is there, what woman particularly, who would not be pleased by that ?), and next because it shows that you wish even in small things to imitate Papa's example ; as I remember telling you he read the Bible through once a year, for depend upon it, if you do but keep as excellent an object always in view, you cannot but succeed in attaining it. Pray Heaven you all four my brothers may attain it. What a happy life that would make out mine !

Now for an account of what we are all doing with ourselves here. The party is extremely small and

compact. Papa, Mama, Harriet and I. Small as we are in number, we get on very comfortably, I assure you. We breakfast and have prayers as usual; then Papa goes out riding, or to settling his farming accounts, and we females walk; tho' Harriet and I do little else but play and sing; she plays the harp and I the piano almost all the day; and in the evening we divide the time between musick and shoemaking, which is now the staple trade of the family. To-morrow the whole Roehampton¹ party come and dine here, and I hope Hartington² too; he looks uncommonly well, but as deaf as ever, poor boy! . . .

The next letter gives a strange insight into the manners and customs of a hundred years ago.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May, 1808.

. . . The event of greatest importance I know of to-day is the arrival and down-lying of a beautiful new carpet in the drawing-room below. It affords conversation to all the visitors, and afforded Mama an excuse for turning out Lord Bulkley's³ great dog, whom he had brought in with him, two very good effects you will allow, to be produced by a new carpet. Alas, poor carpet! In how short a time will it be trod and spit upon by dogs and men, without scruple, and never thought of from week's end to week's end. We go to one, perhaps two, assemblies to-night—Lady Buckingham's (who now gives one every Wednesday), and then I believe, but hope not, to Lady Lonsdale's, where everybody is to be—crushed to death, I take it.

Lord Althorp, Lord Spencer's eldest son, was an enthusiast in all forms of sport, especially in boxing, and after his death a great friend of his said the only

¹ Lord and Lady Duncannon lived there. He was son of the Earl of Bessborough, and Lady Sarah's first cousin.

² William, afterwards sixth Duke of Devonshire (1791-1858).

³ Thomas, seventh and last Viscount Bulkeley. He is mentioned in Miss Burney's diary as being immensely tall.

time he had ever heard Lord Althorp talk with enthusiasm was once when describing a boxing match. He was at this time M.P. for Northamptonshire, and by his determination and perseverance he came to be such a force in politics that his elevation to the peerage in 1834 led to the break-up of Lord Melbourne's second ministry.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 9, 1808.

Here we have had a deluge all the morning, and there is no news stirring, except that my brother has left us for a few days. To-morrow he is to *grace* with his presence three boxing matches, which are to take place all at once, near Dunstable, and which are expected to be much better worth seeing than any former spectacle of this noble nature. I must tell you by the way a scrape in which I am, which, though it makes out an abominably long story, will do as well as repeating over and over again that I think of nothing but you, and that I have nothing more to say ; so here it is. You must know that last Thursday Althorp told us *en famille* and *en grande confidence*, that these three boxing matches were to take place to-morrow, and upon a common called Dunstable Common, and at the same time that if this important secret should by any chance be heard by any of the magistrates who manage the police of either of the three counties which touch Dunstable Common, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, and Hertfordshire, the boxers and lookers-on would certainly not escape being taken up and put into prison. So accordingly we all determined we would conceal it, and carry it with us to the grave. Saturday night Mama and I were scarcely established opposite each other in the opera box, when, according to a now never-failing custom, Lord Temple¹ came, and took his seat for the evening. He talked of one thing, then of another for a long time, and at last said something

¹ Eldest son of the Marquis of Buckingham; created Duke of Buckingham in 1822. He was said to be the Marquis of Carabas in Disraeli's novel, "Vivian Grey."

which led to the subject of boxing. Mama asked him if he was to be at the great fight.

"To be at it? Certainly; I would not miss it for the world," said the fat gentleman.

Now, would not you have thought he was a partisan of boxing? I did for my sins; and he confirmed me in the opinion by talking with a sportsmanlike anxiety about it, and repeating that he was just going down to Buckinghamshire, and should be there just in time for this famous fight. After all this he turned round to me and said: "You know where it is, of course?" with a very careless air.

I, like a ninny, answered directly: "Yes, upon Dunstable Common."

Then conceive how I was thunderstruck when his countenance suddenly changed and he announced to us that he was the happiest man alive, as he had found out what he had been wishing to know for so long, and that he should take measures immediately for the taking up all those gentry, as fights, boxing, and boxers were his chief aversion. I had then the pleasure of seeing him, the son of the Lord-Lieutenant of Bucks, and a magistrate for all the surrounding counties, take down my stupid words in his pocket-book, and leave us to have an advertisement put in the newspapers to the same effect. Thank Heaven, Althorp knows nothing of my blabbing, and is gone down in peace with me! I only trust the battle will be prosperous. I never cared a pin about one before, but if Althorp should ever find out that I told this secret, he never can forgive me. Such is the history of my scrape, dearest Bob; and if I have told it in an incomprehensible way, the fault is George Isted's. For I am writing in the drawing-room, and he is boring away close to me, to Mama, who is hard at work shoe-making. So throw none of the blemishes of this epistle on my shoulders, remember. . . .

This was the famous fight between Gully and Gregson, the Lancashire giant, on May 10, 1808. Lord Buckingham issued an edict against the fight, "got out his bench of magistrates, his *posse comitatus*, his constables, and his Dunstable Volunteers, all in

battle array. The peasants thought the French had landed."¹ The fight came off in Sir John Sebright's park in Hertfordshire, and lasted an hour and a quarter—twenty-seven rounds. They fought in white breeches, silk stockings, and without shoes. Gregson was hopelessly beaten and "most hideously disfigured," though he threw Gully in the third round. It was Gully's last fight. He retired from the ring soon after, and subsequently became a prosperous country gentleman, M.P. for Pontefract,² and won the Derby three times.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 11, 1808.

. . . My brother arrived last night from the scene of the boxing matches. They went off famously, and to my great joy; though they were driven out of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, were not disturbed in Hertfordshire; and all my fright about the effects of my indiscretion ended in smoke. Althorp supped and slept at a small waggoner's inn near Dunstable, where likewise supped and slept Mr. Gully, Mr. Crib, Mr. Jackson,³ and most of the boxing gentry. The conversation must have been refined and elegant to an edifying degree, and I expect to hear scraps of the true slang escape my brother every minute after so improving an evening's pastime. I have not seen him, as he arrived last night while I was dressing for the assembly, and breakfasted in his own room this morning; but I hear he is in raptures at the fight, in which

¹ From Pierce Egan's "Boxiana; or, Sketches of Modern Pugilism," 1814.

² This epigram was written on the occasion of his election :

"Strange is it, proud Pontefract's borough should sully
Its fame by returning to Parliament Gully.
The etymological cause, I suppose, is
His breaking the bridges of so many noses."

³ Crib and Jackson were famous prizefighters.

Mr. Gregson threw his antagonist over his head.
Must not that have been a sweet spectacle?

We were last night at Lady Cholmondeley's, and it was much the best assembly I have been at this year. There are seven large rooms opening one into the other, and magnificently furnished; so there never can be a crowd, and one walks round and round, meeting every person one ever can meet by candle-light in London, all walking comfortably in cool air, which makes it quite a different thing from a common party, and much better. Caroline Lamb was there. She has been in great anxiety lately about poor little Augustus, who has had convulsions with cutting his teeth, poor child!¹ If I was to tell you of all your friends I saw, my paper would not hold their names. . . .

Saturday.— . . . Mrs. Robinson's was a large, good ball. I danced four dances, the two first with Mr. Robinson,² Althorp's friend and a very good partner; and the two last with Lord Percy,³ who, being to be one day the Duke of Northumberland, is of course the best partner in London, by the unanimous consent of all the young ladies, who agree that he is the most charming, interesting, bewitching, fascinating youth that ever trod with the light fantastic toe the chalked floor of any ballroom in Europe since the days of his ancestor Hotspur, who I dare say was reckoned just as delightful by the high-minded, long-waisted dames of Henry the Fourth's Court. Whether I agree with them is another question; certain it is that I am as yet perfectly heart-whole and quite happy. We ate a very good supper, and then came home about three. The weather is getting desperately hot for squeezes, as I felt last night at Lady Essex's, where I was quite giddy and sick with the heat; and as I had much rather dance a hornpipe on my head than faint in an assembly, I was heartily glad when we got away from that one, for I verily believe if we had staid much

¹ Her only son; he died in 1839.

² Frederick Robinson, afterwards Lord Goderich and first Earl of Ripon; and Prime Minister from September, 1827, to January, 1828; the "transient embarrassed phantom" of Disraeli's oft-quoted phrase.

³ Afterwards third Duke of Northumberland and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He married in 1817 Lady Charlotte Clive, and died in 1847.

longer I should have amused the company by some spectacle of the kind.

I wish I had been the night before at one of three masquerades which took place, that I might tell you something about them. Hartington (or his shade, for Hartington is supposed to be studying hard at Cambridge, it being now the middle of the Term) went to one with William Ponsonby,¹ as two tall young ladies, dressed in the last fashion, with diamonds, spotted muslin, and silver turbans and feathers. I would have given anything to have seen them ; they say they were capital figures. Now I hope you think I have written you enough assembly talk ; I do it because I know it amuses you, for otherwise I am getting somewhat tired of the subject, and hope that Wimbledon will soon come into question.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 29, 1808.

Do you know, if you pay me so many compliments about my correspondentship, I shall have my head turned by them, and expose myself in some strange way ; perhaps have all my letters published, and say in my preface that I do it pressed by the importunities of my numerous and judicious friends, or some piece of vanity like it. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
June 2, 1808.

To-night we are going to an assembly which is to outshine all past assemblies since the days of old-fashioned revelry as to splendour. Grosvenor House is to be thrown open to the world for the first time. It is said to be a mass of damask, velvet, gilding, statues, pictures, and magnificence of all sorts, beyond all powers of description or imagination, and has had already, while only in prospect, the advantage of furnishing conversation in plenty to all the insipid misses and empty beaux I have seen for a long while. It is so small an expence of wit to say, "Are you going to Lady Grosvenor's Thursday ? They say it will be very fine," that everyone can afford it, and with the *assaisonnement* of a few pretty distortions of the features, or graceful twistings of the body, passes for

¹ Second son of second Earl of Bessborough ; created Lord de Mauley in 1836.

a vastly brilliant sentence. Such are the merits of Lady Grosvenor in prospect; what they may be in recollection I reserve for to-morrow. My cousin,¹ gives a ball Monday night, which I am delighted at; I quite long to dance a little. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
June 4, 1808.

To-day at least I must not say I am without subjects when all around me the peals of bells,² the firing of guns, the distant rolling of birthday carriages, ought to inspire anybody with a sort of almost poetical verve; though it may be somewhat disturbed by seeing the very unpicturesque effect of her poor old Majesty's setting out from her house to go to her husband's, amidst such a deluge of dirty rain, and such a mob of great-coats and *par à pluies*, not one of whom covered a man loyal enough to give the poor old soul one cheering huzza as she passed by, to put her in mind of old times, when she used to perform the same operation just after some fine victory, and old England was rather higher in the world than she is at present. Well, those times may come again; though I can't say one finds it easy to foretell the improvement. But I will say, like Grandmama Lucan,³ when she has talked of Buonaparte till at last she almost fancies he stands before her, with two heads and a long tail, "I never will talk politicks, I protest; I never do indeed think of them; the Lord preserve us all! That's all I can say," and then begins again directly about the Spanish Revolution. . . .

Lizy Bingham⁴ is with us; she is a most beautiful and most amiable girl indeed, and it is quite delightful to think of how great a comfort she will always be to her father and us all. Nig⁵ is *au comble de joie* at

¹ Lady Camden. ² In celebration of the birthday of George III.

³ Margaret, daughter of James Smith, Esq., married the first Earl of Lucan in 1760, and died in 1815.

⁴ Elizabeth, daughter of the second Earl of Lucan. She was born in 1795, and married George Vernon Harcourt, Esq., of Nuneham; she died in 1839.

⁵ "Nig" or "Gin," Lady Georgiana Spencer, Lady Sarah's younger sister, was at this time fourteen years old. She married Lord George Quin, son of the first Marquis of Headfort, in 1814, and died in 1823.

having a companion who has really sense enough to put one leg and one idea before another, and who would not, like Caroline Pratt,¹ begin crying with fright at the staircase of the Opera, merely at the look of the white stone steps, which literally happened the other day. We went to the Opera last night (to-night being Whitsun-eve), and it was a new one, the music rather pretty; inside our box we had our usual visits from Lord Temple and Willy Ponsonby, both of whom are so regular, I can hardly help laughing when they come in, like clockwork figures of fat and lean.

By the way, I ought to describe Grosvenor House to you, but really I have no room, and less strength of thumb left, to tell you of the vast quantity of beauties of it; for it really surpassed all my expectations. I derived besides great amusement from hearing every person in town, who has more than three rooms on a floor in their house, abuse and criticize that one, as if every one of their audience did not immediately guess at the nasty envy which dictated the observation.

WIMBLEDON,
June 12, 1808.

I must tell you that two days ago Papa made Nurse Strode² a present of twenty guineas, I believe, and announced to her that she was to establish herself here for her future life, as a sort of housekeeper, or rather, what Mary Carter called, "house-creeper." She was so delighted, and so overcome, that the conference ended in their both crying together.

WIMBLEDON,
June, 1808.

I enclose a letter to you from Althorp. I hope he has given you some Northamptonshire news, for as to me I have not a little, I am sorry to say; here it is now arrived, at least a little bit such as it is. Mr. Godley, the boys' tutor, you know, wrote word to Papa that the first of August they may come up. But alas! what do you think has happened?—what has made

¹ Youngest daughter of Lord Camden; married in 1825 Alexander Stewart, Esq.

² She had been nurse to all Lord Spencer's children.



NICE SUPPER: LADY LYTTELTON AS A CHILD.

From a drawing by her mother.

To face p. 16.

Mama groan, Papa wonder, me lament, Mlle. Müller¹ cry and sob, and what must not be told nurse for fear of causing her instant death?—Fritz, poor dear Fritz, has been flogged! and George² has deserved it even more than Fritz; but it was George's first fault, so he escaped. The less dark side of this melancholy subject is that he was not sent up by Mr. Godley, but was flogged only because of not having known his lesson in school, which Mr. Godley owns the noise of the other boys may have prevented. As to their moral conduct, lesson-learning excepted, it is very good, he says, and he begs we won't consider this unfortunate adventure as a disgrace. Pray, now you are an old man you may safely answer me, were you ever flogged? Papa never was, nor Althorp, and I want to know if you were.

The world is full of nothing but Spain, and Spanish patriots.³ Poor people, I admire them so very much, that I wish I could be more sanguine about their success. The man who is here to manage their concerns, Materosa, is a little monster, quite; but I fear I am getting from perverseness quite smitten with one of his colleagues, whom everybody but me calls the green man, but I can't help thinking him remarkably handsome, though his complexion is certainly rather of the bottle hue. I tell you this in time, that you may prepare yourself for hearing of my having taken a trip to *Buenos Ayres de Madridos*—that is, if I can persuade my hero to take me with him; but as the first step towards this—his knowing of my being in the world—is not yet taken, you need be in no immediate alarm.

There is a steam-engine to run a race against any racehorse at Newmarket, next meeting in October, and they say it will certainly win. I really should like to see it; I suppose it is a sort of self-moving carriage. . . .

¹ Governess for many years in the Spencer family.

² Lady Sarah's youngest brothers, then at Eton.

³ They had just risen in revolt against Napoleon, and the Vicomte de Materosa was sent over to make peace and conclude an alliance with England against France. The result was the Peninsular War, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was sent in June with 9,000 men to Portugal.

The name of Mr. Lyttelton, whom Lady Sarah married five years later, occurs here for the first time in the correspondence.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
June, 1808.

. . . My great eagerness for answering you on the spot was in some measure occasioned by my desire to clear poor Mr. Lyttelton from your aspersion of being a mere repeater instead of a founder of a newspaper joke. I own the probabilities on your side of the question are strong, but so are mine; for we only heard he once had said *the* joke, but we never were told it was lately; so that I dare say it was put down in the newspaper from his having said it—it is so very like him, and I don't know that he is a joker by profession enough to think it worth his while to ransack old repositories. He only makes it a point to say everything that comes uppermost, and amidst cartloads of nonsense, of course, some one bright thing may chance to appear sometimes, which is made much of by him and all his hearers for rarity's sake.

The next letter describes the confusion caused by an invitation from the erratic Caroline of Brunswick, wife of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. The "Delicate Inquiry" into her conduct had taken place in 1806. She was exonerated, but nevertheless her company was not sought by the more particular members of society.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
June 24, 1808.

. . . We leave this as headquarters Sunday evening; to which earlier departure than we intended to make there belongs a little private history. Two or three days since, we were all struck dumb with surprize by an invitation in due form from H.R.H. the Princess of

Wales to us, to her ball on Monday, at Blackheath. For some minutes there was nothing but consternation ; no good excuse to be found ; going, quite impossible ; and an immediate answer required. What was to be done ? When suddenly it occurred to us that we had a pre-engagement (of how long standing we will not enquire) from Sunday to Tuesday morning, to my Grandmama at Holywell ! This was pleaded as an excuse to the great Lady, and then we prepared to make good our words by writing to Grandmama¹ to desire she would *remind* us of this old engagement of ours to her—in plain English that she would let us take refuge in her house, from the well-deserved storm of princessly rage a detected lie might produce. My Grandmama has agreed to take us in, as well as Hartington, who finds himself engaged to her from the same reason and in the same way, to pass Monday out of London safe and sound. Tuesday we adjourn to Wimbledon. I remember being rather sorry last summer when London broke up. But this year I have gone out so much and so long, I am really very glad, and though I certainly have liked dancing and such things better than ever this year, I think I shall like quiet and country better than ever, too, which is very lucky, and very odd somehow. Our plans are not settled at all. Perhaps we go to some sea place, perhaps not, and if we do I think Scarborough and Weymouth are hardly far apart enough to mention them as the extremities of our indecision. Every place on the British coast has an equal chance of our presence.

HOLYWELL,
June 27, 1808.

MY DEAREST BOB,—Here we are, as I told you we should be, taking refuge from Royal bores. As usual when we come here, the day is overcast, cold, and oh ! dreadfully threatening of rain. Mama's horror for fear these threatenings should come to effect on Saturday,² is now got to such a pass, that I should not be surprised if she shuts herself up till that fatal

¹ The Dowager Countess Spencer, lived at Holywell, near St. Albans.

² The day of Lady Spencer's "Breakfast" at Wimbledon.

morning, in a dark room, to avoid seeing the clouds gathering as they do.

In another letter about the "Breakfast," Lady Sarah says :

... Last night we wrote about 600 names of the people we are to ask—that is, women and girls ; men we have not yet begun upon. Venables is buying calicoes for tents and ordering stores of chicken's and plover's eggs. As to describing the impudence which has laid hold of everybody, it is impossible, nor the various ways and tricks they condescend to employ to get themselves and their friends asked to this shower bath.

Nobody is here besides ourselves but Hartington, who has a cold, and is deafer than ever I saw him yet. He has been lately engaged in London with several other fine gentlemen and ladies, practising French cotillons, with which they favour the world at every ball that is given now. I never have seen them danced, but I fancy the figurantes at the Opera beat them all to nothing. It has the advantage of being an incomparable excuse for idleness in the morning as well as evening, and then, when they are to be performed, it is a valuable opportunity for fine ladies to produce all their long-forgotten store of shyness, coyness, modesty, humility, and such-like virtues, which in this time of the world have at least the merit of novelty to attract attention by. I wish you had been in our box at the Opera t'other night. Hartington, who was sitting by me and opposite the stage, had just told us how hard he had worked all the morning, making steps and attitudes, holding both M. Deshayes' hands for the cotillon that night, when, lo and behold ! M. Deshayes himself appeared, opposite to us, behind the scenes, en turban bleu celeste and argent, petit jupon de gaze d'argent, and flesh-coloured shoulders and knees, prepared for entering the stage as Almanzor. What do you think this gentleman had the assurance to do ? He espied Hartington, and with all the ease of a very old college friend, gave him a nod and smile, and did something very like kissing his hand to him. Hartington's deep blush of indignation, and drawing back of his whole person instead of bowing, and his

deliberate Cavendish way of saying, “Aunt, don’t you think he was very impertinent?” were all most entertaining contrasts to the reception Deshayes, I suppose, expected his nod would meet with ; and I should hope it will not be tried again. But such little adventures are of course necessary consequences of the cotillon system, and amuse me extremely. We have just been seeing Papa catch a few fine perch in the canal and left him there, Mama and I, to shiver away the rest of the morning. . . .

To the Dowager Lady Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
July 6, 1808.

. . . As to giving you an account of the people at the breakfast, it would be endless ; I fancy there must have been 1,500 at least, and all in the highest spirits, and good-humour and gay dresses and pretty looks. I never saw so lively a scene as it was about six o’clock ; till then they were not all arrived, and did not finish going till near ten, having danced till it was too dark to distinguish features. The Prince was not able to come, being busy settling the Duke of Sussex’s affairs, who is head over heels in debt, and whose carriage was stopped some time back by *officers of the street of Bow*, as some Frenchmen called them. The Duchess of York was there, and quite delighted ; she took moreover much better care of herself than Mama expected, and was very little trouble, walking about with her suite. The Dukes of Cambridge and Gloucester were the only English Royalties we had besides her. Monsieur¹ and his people were very civil, and bowed and complimented sufficiently. As to the Spaniards, they certainly thought but little of the conspiracy, but ate, drank, and enjoyed themselves all day : Lord Holland took care of them. One of them, Andrea de la Vega, I think a very handsome man, but that you may not be too much alarmed for my peace of mind, I must add that to distinguish him from the rest I could find no way but calling him *par excellence* the green one ; the others as horrid. I did not dance at all, as I knew

¹ The Comte d’Artois, afterwards Charles X., King of France.

I should be half dead with only walking about. Hartington of course was one of the very best dancers; his partners were Lady Augusta Greville,¹ Lady William Bentinck, and Miss Wyndham. Several people told me they understood the fête was given to declare publicly his certainly intended marriage with the former of these ladies: which proves the industry of report-mongers is all alive still. I can think of no more anecdotes, dear Grandmama.

Miss Berry was at this party, and thus describes it: "Between two and three o'clock set out for Wimbledon. A fine sunny day; scene beautiful. All the London world there. Dined in a tent. Lady Rosslyn, Mr. Rogers, Lord Erskine, etc., joined us. The Viscount Materosa, on whose subject our papers are so fertile—a little fair, fattish lad. One of the others, Don [Diego] de la Vega, a good, olive-looking Spaniard, with large grave black eyes; but none of them seem to have the *tournure* of people of rank."

Lady Sarah went with her family to Ryde for the summer holidays.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
August 22, 1808.

. . . We went yesterday, as it was a delicious evening, to see Mr. Simeon's, and *the* coveted field. I was quite delighted with both sights, and I think Mr. Simeon's two lodges the only cottages that ever made me wish to live in them; they are so beautifully situated, and so entirely covered with white and purple creepers, that if there had not been an ugly old woman at the door I could really have fancied we were in fairyland all of a sudden. We came back, Papa leading my donkey, for of course I did not walk all that way—I could not, even if I had a certain stout comfortable arm to rest upon—and we passed through the cricket-field, which was full of all the fashionables

¹ Afterwards Countess of Aylesford.

of Ryde, male and female, shewing off their best dresses, and enjoying the beauty of the evening, while two sets of noisy boys, most of them in sailors' dresses, were playing at cricket. It was the merriest scene I ever saw, and I hope to look at it every Sunday evening of our stay here.

To-morrow, if the wind is fair, Papa sets out at eight in the morning upon a grand cruize all round the Island with Commissioner Grey. They are going under a convoy. I am rather afraid, for all that, of the privateers, and shall be glad when it is over ; particularly as if he stays away more than one day I shall have to read prayers more than once, and this, as you know, I had rather be excused doing.

. . . Dear Captain Hallowell!¹ How I wish he was with you again, though I dare say Kerr will do no harm to those determined followers of Bacchus you have on board. Yet the idea of ninety-six lashes makes one quite sick. So he says "Take." Do you know I did just now at tea, and was quite glad to hear the word again.² I am still a little angry with you for having told Hamilton I thought it blackguard. Do you remember how puzzled he was to put a *landsmenlike* word in its stead during the rest of dinner ? Ah ! that dinner was the last you ate here with us. How often have I thought of it since ! I must go back to the drawing-room and see what the world is about there—shoemaking and gossiping, I suppose. Papa is reading Clarendon in his room, and I hear Gin strumming below.

. . . I left Papa and Mama both hard at work cleaning his gun, an employment which begins to be extremely attractive, the 1st of September being next week. We now spend great part of each breakfast and dinner talking over the different plans he has made for shooting parties. He begins by Mr. Player's partridges, then goes to Cowdray. . . .

Ryde, August 28.—. . . The Duncannons are not come, after all. They dawdled and loitered, I suppose, at Roehampton till the time of departure was passed. This irregularity, and certain youthfull instances of

¹ Captain of H.M.S. *Tigre*. In 1828 he assumed the name of Carew, and died as Admiral Sir Benjamin Hallowell Carew in 1834.

² To take tea, etc.

want of foresight as to providing coals, candles, basins and towels for their house here have vastly lowered Venables' opinion of their wit and character. They actually only sent orders for wine to be bought and horses to be shipped across; all the other details of their *ménage* they have left entirely to chance. . . .

A few days later Lady Sarah writes that the Duncannons had arrived and were lodged in a very small house, in which Lord Duncannon "could stand upright without stooping any more than he commonly does."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
September 3, 1808.

. . . Captain Hallowell informs us of the probability of a battle between the Russian fleet and the Swedish and English. If it turns out a good victory, old John Bull may begin to look proud again; for to be sure every detail of these Portuguese battles adds fresh glory to the name of Sir Arthur Wellesley and his brave troops. I, for my part, am really glad to find that I have a good deal of patriotism about me; whenever the *Tigre* has been concerned, I always felt so dreadful a coward that I began to think myself quite a *poule mouillée*, but I really feel so happy and interested now in these fine victories. We all talk of little else to-day, as the London details are arrived.

Sir John Moore, with 10,000 men, was sent to help Sweden against Russia, but the King of Sweden was so impracticable to deal with, that Moore soon left to go back to England, and from thence was sent to join the army in the Peninsula, where he was to make his name immortal by the great retreat to Corunna.

It is interesting to see when new words were first introduced. Writing of the two youngest boys' departure for Eton, Lady Sarah says :

September 7.—The two dear boys' departure took place this morning. They went through the process

of being kissed and blessed and *tipped* with heroic composure. We are in future to dine at four instead of three, which I am very glad of. I hate short mornings, and long evenings too I think when autumn begins, and through all this heavenly weather autumn is plainly perceptible. . . .

Seven o'clock.—Why, you naughty wicked creature, why didn't you tell me before that my letters cost you 15d. a piece—8 shillings and 9d. a week! How very hard on a poor middy! I am vexed so I can think of nothing else. I have already given a good bore to Papa about it, and he shall have another to-morrow morning, till we can fix on some rational scheme. . . . At any rate, no more rigs shall cost you so much.

In those days postage was paid by the recipient, except the lucky people who could obtain a "frank"—*i.e.*, the signature of a Member of either House of Parliament, who had to write the address as well as signature in his own hand. This custom was abolished about 1840, when penny stamps were first introduced.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
September 11, 1808.

I will give you a long history of our adventures. You must know Papa has got a signal book, lent him by Courtenay.¹ After breakfast to-day he established himself at the window to read the signals which were hoisting on board the *Royal William*.

"Oh ho!" said he. "Here's news come from Portugal."

Of course we are all dying for them, so we were very eager to know what made him think so.

"Why," said he, "the *Royal William* has just announced that the *Alpheus* armed cutter is come with despatches."

We all screamed out we must go and ask what they contained, that it would be the best excuse for a sail, that we should be home by church time, that we

¹ The Hon. Courtenay Boyle, R.N., brother of Lord Cork.

should bring the news to the isle before anybody else, that it could not rain—in short, that everything was cut out for the expedition. It was agreed on ; Lady Duncannon sent for express ; cloaks and umbrellas collected, carriage at the door, and we (Papa, Gin, Lady D. and I) packed off in high glee ; Papa complimented violently by the whole party, and not a little pleased with himself for having read the signals in so masterly a way. Mr. Coleman was at hand, and we had a most prosperous navigation to the *Royal William*, talking all the way of the vast advantages of a signal book and telescope, and making conjectures at the news. Courtenay happened to be standing on the top of his immense accommodation-ladder when we arrived, and all his officers were about him.

"Well, Courtenay, what news? What is the news?"

"Why, my Lord, I have the newspapers on board ; there seem to be some reports about town, but—"

"Nonsense! I mean, what news has the *Alphea* brought?"

"News, my Lord. None at all, I fancy."

"What was your signal, then?"

"Oh, only to ask if she had despatches, but she had none."

So there we were looking terribly *land'sfolk-like*, and silly, tossing about in the wherry, while the explanation took place. Papa had unluckily just missed the interrogatory pendant, and, in short, won't yet do for a signal midshipman. However, we pretended to laugh the thing off, and said we wished to pay Courtenay a visit. So we went to his cabin, admired the stern gallery, wondered at the size of the old hulk, and ended with several pretty tunes the band played us. But upon considering what a deplorable figure we should make on coming home, if we had nothing to say but that the *Royal William* was a very large ship, instead of bringing Mama and Nan a good budget of victories fresh from Portugal, we took a sudden resolution to go and pay a visit to the *Warspite*, and off we went with Courtenay in his boat.

The *Warspite* received us very hospitably ; we underwent all the operations of the tub, the intro-

duction to the officers, and were handed about to every part of the ship. Every step put me so in mind of the *Tigre*. I caught myself half-inclined to say, "Pray, Bob, what is that called?" to the man who was doing the honours to me. It is a very fine ship indeed, so high between decks and so roomy, and several contrivances about it struck me as excellent. The Middys dine in the gun-room instead of the cock-pit, which I vastly approve of. We saw them at dinner; I dare say they hated us for coming in upon them, all the whole crew of officers I warrant; as to the *mids*, I saw them winking, and pointing, and tittering after us, so that I dare say we were well talked over. I took the greatest care, I assure you, to behave very uncommonly well; paid wondrous fine compliments to every beam and nook on board, attended with the utmost complacency to the small talk which was turned out on the occasion, about its being "Quite a little world upon water, ma'am, is it not?" and "There are regions of darkness which must surprize your Ladyship," etc., etc., and besides took pains to talk of everything rather than the guns, for fear of being suspected of hinting at a salute. . . .

. . . What a very great delight I have just had from the nice comfortable letter I have received from you! How I do enjoy your little viz. to shore! That dear Duckworth and his wife, and Captain Kerr too for being all parties to it, and good horses into the bargain, and fine weather—in short, it was delightful I am sure, and it has given me almost as much pleasure as you and poor Clifford.¹ How I felt for him when Lady D. made that unlucky blunder; but I fear his life must be expected to afford him many such mortifications. All I can say is, that I don't envy his mother's feelings, when she thinks of all the miseries her conduct has entailed on so deserving a young man, and so amiable a young woman² as her two unlucky children are. Poor Clifford, it speaks very well of him to have felt it so much.

¹ Clifford was afterwards Sir Augustus Clifford, K.C.B. He was a sailor son of the fifth Duke of Devonshire by Lady Elizabeth Foster, who married the Duke in 1809.

² Lady Elizabeth's daughter was called Caroline St. Jules; she married the Hon. George Lamb, brother of Lord Melbourne.

RYDE,
September 15, 1808.

I got a long and most delightful letter from Harriet Cavendish¹ t'other day; she is at Castle Howard. I believe I have often told you how well she writes; her letters keep one in a constant laugh. She is to spend Christmas with us at Althorp; and Hartington, too, I fancy. He is now doing the honours at Chatsworth to whoever chooses to go there; it is a very good way of spending his vacation; and it will make him so popular among the natives too, for he invites several of them. The summer he generally goes thro' very creditably, it is in winter he gets into unlucky scrapes, poor man; the London young ladies are terrible enemies when they all agree in attacking one and the same person. I trust he will get through all the sieges well, and end with some helpmate at least not *very* much older than himself, which would be certainly an advantage.

The news of the signing of the Convention of Cintra, by which the French were compelled to evacuate Portugal, and the Russian fleet in the Tagus was surrendered to England, arrived in September. The general indignation aroused by this event was due to the terms of the Convention, which allowed the French, notwithstanding their defeat at Vimeira, to return to their country with their arms and artillery on the sole condition that they were to evacuate Portugal. Sir Arthur Wellesley had been superseded in the command first by Sir H. Burrard and then by Sir Hew Dalrymple, who was Commander-in-Chief when the Convention was signed. Dalrymple and Burrard were not employed again on active service. Sir Charles Cotton was Admiral in command of the fleet in the Tagus.

¹ Harriet Lady Granville's letters have been published by her son, the Hon. F. Leveson Gower.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
September, 1808.

We are to-day full of this deplorable news from Portugal. What a shameful piece of work that stupid Sir Hew Dalrymple has made of the capitulation! Oh that Sir Arthur Wellesley had been at the head! He would not, I am sure, have thrown away all the fruits of his glorious victories in this blind manner. Bedingfield wrote us the whole account from town, and ended his letter capitally. He says "John Bull is angry, so is John Bedingfield." Sir Charles Cotton is as much against it as we are, they say, by a letter Admiral Otway has received from him, so it is all those puddings the red-coats' doing. I am not sorry for that.

I have made acquaintance to-day with another sailor who delights me, Commissioner Grey.¹ His manners are so very frank, cordial, and intelligent. I had expected him like Lord Grey, who is no favourite of mine, I mean as to manner, so I was most agreeably surprized.

WIMBLEDON,
September 24, 1808.

. . . We had a visit, and of course a most cordial one, from Mr. Allen² this morning; he grows more and more *prebendal*, sleek, and well-loving, and so does she, whom Grandmama Lucan very well calls his *pillar of sugar*. They and Mama and I moaned over the Convention by the hour. They say Ministers here were really quite glad of this dreadful fire at Covent Garden,³ as it gave the mob something to do, or they must have risen in riot, such is the general discontent at this infamous and unaccountable transaction. How I long for an explanation of it all which might clear Sir Arthur Wellesley! I can't bear him to get into any scrape after his most glorious battles.

¹ Brother of first Earl Grey, at this time Resident Commissioner at Portsmouth. He was made a Baronet in 1814, and was father of Sir George Grey, Home Secretary under Lord Palmerston.

² A clergyman who had been Lord Althorp's tutor at Cambridge. He was afterwards Bishop of Ely.

³ Covent Garden Theatre was burnt on September 20.

Sunday.— . . . I am now going to write the last volume of this work, *en attendant* Papa's arrival from Cowdray. . . .

Lady Sarah then proceeds to give a detailed description of her father's shooting visits. It is difficult to realize that it is the account given by a most punctilious and respectable father to his daughter, a girl of twenty-one, who passes it on to her brother of seventeen.

. . . Here I am again, having received Papa and heard all he had to say, sat by him while he ate his dinner with a good fire behind him, and the scarlet curtains of the dining-room close shut down, quite in the autumn style; and now I have seen him safe back to the library, and left the old couple *tête-à-tête*, I must give you the pickings of the conversation. Dad has a very peculiar knack of giving a good account of a visit, when he returns home from it. I fancy it is from that really angelic disposition of his to see everything and everybody *en beau*, instead of complaining of and ridiculing all he has seen; he talks in so satisfied a way over it one quite enjoys it all with him. He has had most excellent sport, delightful weather, and what he calls really very good sort of pleasant society during his jaunt, has shot very well himself (thirty brace in four days) and is not a bit tired, and not sorry to spend a day or two at home neither—in short, he brings his usual stock of bright sunshine about him which it is impossible not to partake of.

Papa spent one of his days at Woolbeding, the residence of our not respectable cousin Lord Robert Spencer.¹ It is a beautiful place; the party it contained was a curious one for Papa to have been in. The honours of the house were done by Mrs. B—, a lady still very beautiful though past fifty, and who is in more than one sense the mistress of that abode. Her ill-fated husband, a poor old twaddler, was there too, and three of her children grown up. Besides

¹ Third son of the third Duke of Marlborough; he married Mrs. Bouverie in 1811, and died in 1829.

these there were a German baron and an American sportsman, very fit company for the host and his fair friend. Papa saw several children playing about, but thought it most prudent not to inquire minutely into their birth and parentage, for fear of getting into some scrape in the style of poor Lady Duckworth at your Torquay dinner. I forgot to mention two of the guests: Mrs. Fox (Charles Fox's widow)¹—you must have heard of her character, not the clearest—and a Miss W—, an humble companion and protégée of hers, and natural daughter to Charles Fox by someone else. There's a set of people for you! Pleasant enough and respectable is Lord Robert's old age, spent in so infamous a collection of people.

WIMBLEDON,
September 26, 1808.

We spent this morning in London. . . . As Mama, Nan, and I were sitting most uncomfortably in the fusty, dirty drawing-room, came a loud rap at the house-door; and as I was looking stupidly that way, expecting Mr. Crowle or some other thorough Londoner to bow in, think how merrily I jumped up off the old sofa when in walked your dear Captain himself, and your Captain as I first knew him—a stout, healthy-looking man. He said so many pleasant things, too; that he has hopes of a good Surgeon and a good Chaplain. All this and everything he said was most satisfactory; he really talks of you and all the youngsters (including Perceval) just as the best father would, the most judicious and affectionate father. What a blessing he is to us, good Heavens! I said my say to him about *gigs*; but what signifies my say? His gig is the nicest little thing in the world—no more danger in it than any other boat; and tho' he could not give me one good reason for using it, I see my terrors won't cure him of going in an odious little canoe. Oh, I am quite out of patience about it—even with Captain Hallowell!

Well, now I must tell you our plans are changed. My uncle² is gone to Brighton, and means to

¹ Mrs. Armitstead; she married Mr. Fox in 1795.

² Richard, second Earl of Lucan, Lady Spencer's brother; born 1764, died 1839.

bathe there all October ; now, as he finds it dull (God knows I don't wonder at him—nasty place !), he has used all his eloquence to persuade Mama to join him. And Mama has consented. The want of sea and salt air here, and the total solitude we should be in during Papa's shooting jaunts, made the prospect of a six weeks' residence in this place somewhat flat ; besides that, upon my being bragged of as a pattern of health to Sir Walter Farquhar,¹ he immediately said : " Aye, she's the *pecture* of health noo, but ye must take care and lay in as much more stock of strength as ye can by winter ; ye know hoo the winter pulls ye doon again." So, in short, because I am well I must be made better ; and Brighton is the *only* place, and off we go. A London physician well knows the summer is of no use but to recover from raking and prepare for more raking for a fine London lady, and therefore peoples Brighton with all such poor wretches during the whole season. Whether the wretch in question (meaning me) is of opinion that a month spent looking at a boundless expanse of naked sea, adorned once in sixteen days with the faint glimmerings of a passing fleet of colliers on the horizon, and in a very large, Londonish town full of fine folks, barouches, princes, theatres, and public lounging-rooms, will be pleasant after such a delicious stay in such a heavenly place as the *isle*, is another question. However, the local I care very little about ever, you know.

Sunday Evening.—. . . I can't say I shall dislike getting quite clear away from the smoky atmosphere of this old town again, and even Brighton will be better than a mere villa, perhaps. At least, I had better think so, as go there we shall so soon. The worst part of the business is, that every day we hear of some acquaintance of ours who "is so delighted we are to spend next month at Brighthelmstone ; I shall be there. How lucky !" " Dear me ! how lucky !" one is forced to answer. I don't know why I have something in me *revêche*, I fear—which gives me always a terrible objection to growing very intimate with any acquaintance, tho' I may like them as a mere *shaking-hand* friend ; so few people remain as high in one's opinion as they

¹ A famous Scottish doctor of that day. He attended Mr. Pitt on his death-bed.

were, after a close inspection of them, that it is running the risk of growing to dislike them to get extremely intimate. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," you know; and "En voyage, ou aux eaux, toutes les liaisons deviennent intimes," says Madame de Genlis but too truly. So, in short, as poor Lady Clermont always says when the blunt end (for it never is a point) of her story is coming out, after almost as much rigmarole and as many quotations as I have given you—in short, I had rather we had not acquaintances at Brighton.

I hope that the moon and stars are shining upon you, dearest Bob. Talking of stars, here are some pretty lines of Thomson's :¹

"Ye that keep watch in heaven as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations ; while your angels strike
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre."

Aren't they pretty? Repeat them your next middle watch, and see whether they'll clear the sky for you—I should think full as well as whistling will bring wind.

One good thing belonging to Brighton expedition is that I shall have something to write to you about. I shall be able to tell you that the Prince of Wales walked on the Steyne such a day; that Mrs. Fitzherbert was in low spirits such another; that there was an assembly at the Pavillion t'other night, to which Mr. Such-a-one and his wife were not asked, and Mrs. Such-a-one went without invitation; and all those interesting pieces of news which Brighton always inspires its inhabitants with, and which make it so unlike a summer retreat. We go there with the most heroic resolution to dine at three, live quite away from all fashionables, and see not a living soul; but I well know how that must end; we shall be drawn into it all, I am sure. *Tant pis*—I hate it heartily; dissipation out of London has something particularly disagreeable about it.

WIMBLEDON,
October 1, 1808.

I cannot bear to read the private letters published by the newspapers from Portugal, describing the change of opinion of the English in the minds of the

¹ From a hymn at the end of "The Seasons."

Portuguese in consequence of this scandalous business. It makes me so angry and so cross with all those sad Generals of ours, that I really believe it is unwholesome. There is the fatal hour of eight, and I am going back to the earliest ages of the world, and to read of heroes and great men who would not have signed conventions.

BRIGHTON,

October 6, 1808.

We arrived here yesterday, and are established in a very small dirty house. I love it very much, for I hear the dear waves breaking as plain as possible ; we are close to the sea. No ships, alas ! But I never look beyond the breakers ; it is a very dreary prospect to see a boundless watery horizon after Spithead, and we have plenty of lively noises and sights on land, for this place is grown quite immense, and *fourmille* with barouches, tandems, curricles, men, women and children, on horseback and donkey back, jostling each other, quite in London-like pibble-prabbles in the streets ; fine buildings without number, and extending every way, so that I did not know it at all for the same poor quiet Brighton we used to come to every year formerly. I feel everything puts me in mind of childhood here, and I like it. My favorite Mme. de Genlis says somewhere that scenes which put one in mind of childhood one always loves to be in, scenes that put one in mind of youth never. “*Parce qu'on regrette la jeunesse, on ne regrette jamais l'enfance.*” How true that is !

BRIGHTON,

October 13, 1808.

. . . What will my feelings and ideas be, my Bob, when I read about you in the *Gazette* some day or other ? I really cannot conceive a greater happiness *ici bas* than the moment when I hear of your having acquired some very brilliant glorious fame (all limbs safe, *ca va sans dire*). . . .

I am sitting in the dining-room, under Mama, who is, I hear, making the agreeable to two friends of ours just arrived in this city—Lord and Lady Jersey. I am in some dread of being sent for up, and I should not at all approve it ; being rather a little afraid of Lady J., tho' I have great respect and esteem for her character.

But she is so completely a *maitresse femme* (very naturally, from her immense fortune which always made her superior to everybody she ever lived among), that I feel overpowered by her somehow. He is a most amiable and excellent man I really believe, and I am on the whole very glad they are here, as it makes a nice society for Mama. It is so good of her to have come to live in this place she so much dislikes, that I am anxious for any little improvement to her situation here.

George, fifth Earl of Jersey, married in 1802 Lady Sarah Sophia Fane, eldest daughter of the tenth Earl of Westmorland, whose wife was Miss Child, the great heiress, with whom he had eloped to Gretna Green. Her father, Mr. Child, left his place, Osterley, and his great wealth to his eldest granddaughter. Lady Jersey is "Zenobia" in Disraeli's "Endymion."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

BRIGHTON,
October 14, 1808.

About five o'clock this morning the wind, thinking we had enjoyed his absence long enough, rose up from the S.W. and began tumbling about the waves, shaking the windows, driving the rain and whistling in a tremendous way. How can you hear each other speak in this sort of weather? For even in this land habitation the noise of doors, windows, and weather is such that I fear my *laudable* voice in reading prayers had but little effect on the drums of my congregation. Thank Heaven the weather is calmer and I have just been to the bath! All the town is assembled and interested in the fate of a poor collier which lies amidst all the surf, and can't get off, and they say it must be dashed to pieces if it lasts long. To be sure I feel for it, but I should feel more if it was a ship of war; my indifference about colliers is prodigious, I own. Nannette is always abusing me for not flying to the window when any come in sight; indeed, I was punished for this laziness t'other day, for I missed by

it the sight of the Russian fleet, going towards the Downs, I believe. It passed through at so great a distance that I did not lose much, and at any rate I detest its being sent home with flying colours in this scandalous way, so I am glad I did not see it.

The Russian fleet surrendered to Admiral Sir Charles Cotton off the coast of Portugal, and was sent to England to be held hostage till peace was concluded between England and Russia.

BRIGHTON,
October 19, 1808.

MY DEAREST BOB,—I am just returned from a dowager-like airing of one hour along the high road. It is so cold and windy that I and my donkey should both stand a good chance of being blown over the cliff into the sea; so Gin and I accordingly jumbled away in a less airy vehicle through all the fine part of the town. It is very entertaining, “through the loopholes of retreat, to peep at such a world,” and every now and then to leave our quiet west cliff to see how fine folks amuse themselves on the Steyne. Not a soul do we know among them, except Lady Jersey (the *young*, of course). She dined with us two days since; her husband is shooting. She is a very good sort of woman and very handsome too. Considering this, her fondness for her husband and her £40,000 a year, one must not think for a moment of the very trifling circumstances about her manner and conversation which might be improved; and I feel myself much less afraid of her than I was. Her *belle-mère*¹ is here undergoing that most painful operation, the loss of all the admiration, attention and flattery which used to surround her. Indeed she has undergone it, being sixty years old—but she is still very beautiful, very full of affectation and coquetterie, and nothing can persuade her that she is more than thirty, which is rather ridiculous.

The post to-day has brought only one solitary letter for me from Grandmama Spencer. She expresses herself as being totally puzzled by Althorp and his

¹ Frances, daughter of Dr. Twysden, D.D., Bishop of Raphoe. George IV. was in love with her at one time.

way of getting on through life. For my part I certainly think it uncommon, but can't see anything so very strange in it. Instead of being fond of a noisy society, as most men are at his age, he happens to be fond of a quiet solitude, and has been spending this summer just after his own heart, with a little hunting to keep him in constant supply of exercise and eagerness, a great deal of study (for Papa is quite delighted with his account of himself in that respect) and good, useful, serious study, to prevent his mind from growing quite rusty, and the bore of a friend *tête-à-tête* with him, which must have kept his temper supplied with that gentle, constant degree of rubbing down, and keeping in, so indispensable, and which perfect, complete solitude can't procure for one. Considering all this, I don't much wonder at his loving Brigstock as he does. But I certainly shall wonder if many more years pass away before he has changed his mind in one respect. Oh, my Bob, when I have to tell you all about the figure, face, temper, character, name, of her who will turn out our new sister, whoever the happy woman may be, how many details that letter will contain! Well, I promise you now, that I will tell you the first time I see any good likely symptoms, next April at soonest, for the hunting season must be well over before he thinks of going to town. What a deal of nonsense all this is! But I love sometimes to set fancy upon a full gallop forward, and poke about, and build castles, and enjoy them by myself, and as I have often told you, I am writing to myself now. Now don't answer me in family letters at all, remember, about this of old brother. . . .

4, BEDFORD Row, BRIGHTON,
October, 1808.

MY DEAREST BOB,—Our newspaper arrived to-day in a parcel from London, and long before the letters. I flew as usual to the Ship-news, and saw "Arrived, the 14th, from Plymouth at Portsmouth to fit for foreign service, the *Tigre*, 80 guns. Capt. Halowell." I had no sooner read this and found by it that we must hear from you to-day, than I took up my station at the bow window, and began watching for the man who goes every morning to the post office

for our letters. There I stood in the full glare of the sun, and really *séchante sur pied*, while our tiresome messenger was dawdling along, stopping every moment to flirt with the prawn woman, or to loll over the rails staring at a stupid fishing-boat ; I could almost have jumped out of the window to snatch the letters from him ; and when at last Jean Martinet vouchsafed to bring them up, I was quite in an agitation with impatience and curiosity. It was all most delightfully satisfied by the arrival of such a post. . . . I perfectly agree with you in approving your clergyman's account of himself, and think it speaks very well of him ; surely a diffident, modest, quiet-mannered man must be much better than a drunken, rattling fool, so I trust you may still get him. . . .

CHAPTER II

1808

IN consequence of the great unpopularity of the Convention of Cintra, the three Generals—Sir Hew Dalrymple, Sir Harry Burrard, and Sir Arthur Wellesley—were recalled, and in the following December Sir Hew was formally censured for his action. Meanwhile reinforcements were being steadily despatched to Sir John Moore, who was instructed to co-operate with the Spaniards in driving the French out of Northern Spain. A farewell dinner was given at Portsmouth, by the Prince of Wales, to his regiment before it embarked for Portugal. He did not distinguish himself at it, if we are to credit Leigh Hunt's allusion to it in his famous diatribe on the Prince, for which he was imprisoned for two years. Hunt scoffed at some newspaper's eulogium of H.R.H., and said that “this *Adonis* was a corpulent gentleman of fifty; this *Breather of Eloquence* could scarcely say a few decent extempore words, if we are to judge at least from what he said to his regiment on its embarkation for Portugal.” Lady Sarah was almost as scathing in her letter about it beforehand.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

BRIGHTON,
October 20, 1808.

I long for your account of your princely dinner; I trust you won't get so very much invested by the

royal example as to be too drunk to write next day, that's the utmost one can hope for. Of course you'll tell us if the Prince spoke to you or was decently civil to any of the naval officers, he being in general famous for having too much of the effeminate milksop, or rather winesop, about his august character, to be fond of a real manly brave man, like a sailor, at least so they say. If I could believe he really disliked them I should pay him in kind most heartily, but I don't think it possible. His illustrious and amiable spouse makes up for her husband's general antipathy by a few rather unfortunately strong fond partialities, which balances the matter! Perhaps however one is as little true as the other. As all the Regiment is embarked, I suppose and dread that he will now favour this his own beloved place, though after all he *may* not find us out; but if he does, it will be quite shocking to be visited and spoken to for ever, and out of mere *désœuvrement* too; the only motive which could make him vouchsafe to pay attention to a noted *bluestocking* like Mama.

The lady you describe as having such beautiful grey coach horses is, I should think, Mrs. Champney, who is, I fancy, wife to a man famous for the most extraordinary of distinctions; being the best *mask* in the world. I never heard of him in any other way except at a masquerade; where I have heard him, and watched him too without being tempted to think his performance at all tolerable, certainly not good enough to make up for the absence of all other merit. He and his wife contrive, however, to extend the duty of good masqueraders beyond the usual limits; and last summer twelvemonth performed for *two months* the task of passing for a travelling Spanish Archbishop and his niece. In these characters they so completely took in all the northern country gentlefolks that they were asked about, fêted, puffed in the newspapers, and never guessed, at least so they say. And this they did for two months, never speaking all the time anything but broken English. Considering they are fine people and get nothing for these labours, one rather wonders at their choice of an amusement.

BRIGHTON,
October 24, 1808.

I am so poor in the news way to-day, and, moreover, so uncertain about your getting letters before you sail, that I should perhaps miss this post if it were not the 24th of October, but on that day to the end of time, till you are an old weather-beaten Admiral and I an old world-beaten maid or matron, I must write to you ; as without this you might forget it is your birthday, and you might not be sure (thro' a shrewd guess I should think you would give) that I think of you all day long, and that my heart is full of the warmest wishes for every sort of blessing to surround you ever. You are seventeen to-day. How time does gallop ! How very well I remember as if it was but yesterday, your christening, your childhood, and all your history, and bound up as it has been with mine, what a continual source of blessings and happiness and comfort you have been to me. In every family as numerous as ours, though there be none of what are called partialities, there must be some little sort of societies, of two or three members each, who have been more together, and therefore belong to one another in a more intimate way than they can do to the rest, either owing to age or character. Now, though I do so doat upon my dear Althorp and my three younger children, I don't know what to say I feel for you my Bob, it is a different feeling. Althorp I look up to, the three children I look down upon, but you are my own brother of my *society*. And I really am sure there is no feeling more delicious than what one has for one's brother. I am convinced no other is like it ; certainly no other I ever felt. Heaven grant nothing may ever disturb this happy, delightful feeling in me, and may it always be justified by your conduct and brightened by your happiness, my dearest Bob !

BRIGHTON,
October 27, 1808.

At twelve o'clock every day the carriage drives to the door to take up all airers, or shoppers, or visitors ; me at the head. Nan generally comes with me, sometimes Mama or Mlle. M., *pour acheter quelques petites choses*. I bring them home, and we find oysters on the

table for luncheon. We drink tea at eight, and afterwards read till nine in a book of history, loud, of course, and by turns, while the listeners make shoes; and then till ten we read some more entertaining work, when Gin is gone to bed. At ten Nan packs herself up, and sets out trembling and quaking, to be blown back to her home under the protection of her footman; and Mama and I very soon follow her example. Such, my Bob, is the scheme of each day among us poor lonely females on this bleakest and most melancholy of all coasts. I must own that the time goes very fast, which is a blessing belonging to an eventless way of life always.

Major Rennell, who is here introduced, began life as a midshipman, but left the Navy and joined the East India Company's Military Service. He became a leading authority on geography and published several works on the subject. His daughter married Admiral Sir John Rodd Mrs. Rennell was a Miss Thackeray, and great-aunt of the novelist.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

BRIGHTON,

October 30, 1808.

We paid a visit to Major Rennell's family to-day; it is a visit which always amuses me beyond measure. The Major himself is so very deeply learned, has gone thro' so many various changes of fortune, that an hour's conversation with him always must leave one's head better furnished than when he began his visit. At the same time, he has not an idea of anything but geography, history, geometry, and navigation; and as to "all meaner things," he really seems not to know they exist. When he described his journey from London here, he said that "more than the adequate proportion of rain seemed to have fallen upon the low country which extends from one *chalk ridge* to the other"—meaning the frightful plain from Ryegate Hill to the downs here; and I dare say he knows every different change of the strata of the soil the whole way. Then his wife (whom he considers as a pattern

of female perfection) has no ideas of a higher order than her own kitchen can furnish, and talks, as she thinks, of absolutely nothing but her cookmaid, house-maid, and footman, and how they were all out one day, and how she went and opened the house-door herself, and every syllable that passed between her and some man who knocked at the door at that moment. She calls her daughter Miss Jane, and gives a handful of halfpence out of her pocket to her son when he has been a good boy, saying at the same time: "Mr. William, a halfpenny here, and a halfpenny there; money goes away at this rate, Mr. William, I promise you." All this with the room full of people. *Miss Jane*, as she calls her, is a most delightful person—so very sensible, so far above ye common run of women; she has all her father's sense, and, I fancy, a good deal of his learning, but still belongs just enough to the ordinary world, and is not in the least vulgar, as indeed I don't think a very sensible, good-humoured, and quiet-mannered person ever can be. She has a great deal of conversation, and as much open simplicity about her as her father and mother.

This morning Mrs. Rennell took full possession of Nanette, Mama was talking with Miss Rennell, and the Major was sitting quite close to an old gentleman whom we found in the room with them; I, who was in no coterie by this means, could not help catching a word or two from one set and a word or two from the other, and I would have given the world for a pencil to write down these odd bits; it was worthy of a scene in a play. Mrs. R. running on upon: "Aye, indeed, such a storm as we had here one year; I assure you our coachman, who was on his box at the door to take us out to tea with Mrs. Somebody, sent us in word he did not think it quite safe; so the Major advised us not to venture, as the coachman thought we had better not, you see; and Miss Jane and I were both dressed, too, it was a terrible disappointment; but, however, as the coachman would not, you know . . ." And so on, over and over again. I then tried to hear what the daughter was saying to Mama, about her father's health, of the books she was reading, and of the fullness of the place, and other common topicks. But I heard every now and then a word of the two old

gentlemen's talk. "Yes, sir," said the Major, "as I was saying, the rising of the ground, or the *Immaus*, which originates in the northern region of India, continues extending itself . . ." And then followed a dissertation which I should have liked to hear out, as something always sticks of what he says about one's memory which may be useful; but Miss Rennell effectually diverted my attention from the *Immaus* by beginning to question and talk to me about you. . . .

BRIGHTON,
November 7, 1808.

This morning Lady Bathurst came to visit Mama. She told us she had seen you. "How so," said Mama, "and where?" So she told us that as she was at Portsmouth some little time back, and walking along the street, she saw four or five young men walking together. One of them said: "But Spencer says so; don't you, Spencer?" and called to a fat, round, great big companion of his, whom Lady Bathurst shrewdly guessed to be no other than that same person she had heard of so often. Upon which, she says, she stopped and stared you full in the face, to get acquainted at least with your looks, till you must have thought her mad. Try and recollect whether you observed this. She is a remarkably handsome woman, though not *very* young, and has a particularly beautiful complexion, as bright as rouge, which she don't wear. She is rather fat in person, but her face is not so.

. . . Grandmama L. sends us a joke of Mary Carter's on the Convention. She said, upon hearing of it: "One, two, three, four, five, we caught Junot alive; six, seven, eight, nine, ten, we let him go again." You may remember the old song for little children which Nurse Strode used to sing in our ears while we were going to sleep some fifteen years back, of which this is a parody.

BRIGHTON,
November 11, 1808.

I have been cutting out for you a bit of the *Morning Chronicle* which has made us laugh. I conclude you know that Ministers had the Tower guns fired upon the reception of the news of the Convention, and they

argued the point in the Cabinet so long that it was not decided till nine o'clock at night, so that the firing of the guns (which never takes place but before sunset) alarmed all London.

Sunday, 13th.. . . I have been jumbling, but I am come back the same blank sheet of lead as I went out, a bad hearing for correspondents this. I wish I could, like Granny Lucan, twist off a letter as she does to us, with absolutely nothing in it, and yet which makes one die with laughing. . . .

The next letter gives a vivid imaginative description of what would happen to Europe if Napoleon was killed. It gives an idea of the way he dominated every part of it, and one sees how it was naughty children of that day were quelled into virtue by threats of being caught by "Boney."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

BRIGHTON,

November 16, 1808.

We have been paying a round of visits, and found everybody at home—a great misfortune, you know. We went to Miss Cholmondeley's, then Miss Cole-man's, then Major Rennell's, and (in the two first) had a good dish apiece of small talk, and in the latter a bad dish of croaking and melancholy about the taking of Vittoria, or rather the entering of Vittoria by Buonaparte, and the horrible number of his best Generals he is stuffing Spain with. Mama is very desponding about Spanish affairs. The Major gives her a little comfort; he is sanguine upon the subject. As to me, I see but one hope. In a country like that, where every dog and cat is against the French, and where the inhabitants are certainly not scrupulous or gentle in their means of defence, and in which so many shots are flying about from all quarters, why should not one of these shots hit the Emperor's own head? Now mind, Bob, *I* would not shoot him—no, not if I was standing by his bedside with a pistol in my hand—nor would I advise anyone to do it. But as to not wishing that some random shot in Spain, fired

off by some lucky Don or other, should swerve in the air and rid the world of so very mischievous a man (there is true feminine gentleness for you!), how can I help wishing it? Now, only think of the beautiful golden, rosy dream I build upon this idea! First, there would be great confusion all over Europe. Did you ever read "Cinderella"? Do you remember the account of the sudden change of her dress and appearance, when she had passed the fatal hour at the ball, and all her fine magic ornaments left her at once, and she was reduced to a mere beggar girl again? Well, that would be the way with Europe. Kingdoms would fall back to dukedoms, dukedoms to poor little counties, field-marshals who now strut about in purple and fine clothes might chance to go to jail; soldiers would scamper back to their poor neglected ploughs and cottages, and the poor frightened good folks, the Pope, the old King of Naples, the Prince of Portugal, the King of Spain, would pop out of their hiding-places and begin to bustle about to recover their goods and chattels, as then there would be no good head opposed to them. Whoever succeeds Napoleon won't be half so clever or so wicked, and would soon be beat back to within bounds. Then comes peace—long, quiet peace. All ports open; no privateers to prevent coasting excursions, no expeditions, no fleets to be stationed God knows where; poor sea-captains *obliged* to live at home; perhaps a journey over to Paris possible (which I own I should like vastly); no taxes to grumble at, no grievances to complain of. In short, my dream is beautiful, I assure you, quite beautiful; and I weave it over and over again, with all sorts of pretty things embroidered on it.

BRIGHTON,

November 20, 1808.

We have talked of nothing but Captain Seymour and the *Amethyst*, for the last two days. What a glorious action! And how I liked the way in which the newspapers announced it. So: "The *Amethyst*, 36 guns, Captain Seymour, on such a day, engaged *La Thétis*, of 44 guns; need we add that she took her?" And this really was needless, when one knows those dear brave heroic sailors, or anything about them. Who but English sailors would have given three

cheers upon seeing a 74 come in sight, in the *hopes* it was an enemy to engage, just after they had gone through that dreadful battle?

Captain, afterwards Admiral Sir Michael Seymour, Bart., in command of H.M.S. *Amethyst*, engaged the French frigate *La Thétis*, "close to the N.W. point of Groa," on the night of November 10. After two and a half hours of hard fighting at close quarters, *La Thétis* was captured. H.M.S. *Triumph* and *Shannon* arrived, but not till the fight was over, although they shared in the capture, and gave the French captain an excuse for saying the *Thétis* had been taken by two frigates and a 74.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
November 24.

. . . Our dinner yesterday went off very well. Catinka was in high feather and looking extremely well, and seeming very happy, and quite a staid English matron. As to Lord Pembroke, he looks so young and blooming that he might be taken for a man of thirty-five.¹ Poor Mr. Cholmondeley hardly spoke a word, and looks quite the picture of melancholy. As to the other *convives*, they were quite in the old style. Lord Stair² snoring and staring; Mr. James thinner than ever, but in great good-humour, and talking most of all the rest. Catinka asked a great deal about you, as she always does. Your old friend Lord Herbert³ is with a clergyman in Warwickshire, to spend that difficult time while a person is neither boy nor man: too big for school, too childish and ignorant for college, and too unmanageable for home.

Harriet has just interrupted me; she looks very

¹ Eleventh Earl of Pembroke. He was at this time forty-nine. Lady Pembroke was the daughter of Count Woronzow, the Russian Ambassador, and married Lord Pembroke as his second wife early in 1808.

² John, sixth Earl of Stair; at one time Ambassador to St. Petersburg. Died 1821.

³ Eldest son of Lord Pembroke. He succeeded his father in 1827.

well, and is as usual all kindness and cordiality. Thank Heaven a plan of the Duke's of going to Brighton is ending in smoke! This I am delighted at: first, because Harriet would dislike going very much, and next, because if she don't go, I believe and hope she will go down to us at Althorp, which I should very much enjoy, as you may suppose. Hartington is returned to Cambridge, after having spent his summer quite *en Grand Seigneur* at Chatsworth.

You see I tell you every single thing that happens: how I do love to write to you! But I don't love what Mama has just been in to tell me. That the French are at Valladolid, and that brave Blake's¹ army is cut to pieces. Such is the dismal news, to make this day more dismal if possible. A dirty blanket hung up before the window would look just like the fog.

. . . Finished at half-past four, sitting with candles at my writing table in the painted room. Window shutters open, view dismal beyond expression. Carriages rumbling in the distant streets, and palace clock striking the half hour. A thorough London afternoon. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
November 29, 1808.

London is, of course, as unlike what it was when you lived in it last winter as possible. Besides Crauford, Mr. James, Dutens, and a few more of those happy beings, who belong to it full as much as the smoke does, there is nobody in it at all, no stationary body, I mean; people are passing thro' like us, on their way to their several Christmas parties, but like us they are all *un pied en l'air*. We dined out Sunday at Frederick North's.² He is a most agreeable man, as I fancy I have often told you; he is just going to spend the winter in Sicily—a very wise plan, I think. I have sometimes wished I was a very rich single man, to put those passing whims into execution every now and then, but as often have corrected that wish, for, ten to one, if I was in that situation, instead of being a happy, well-employed, respectable character, like

¹ Joachim Blake, the Spanish General, commanded the Spanish army in the Peninsula, and was defeated, October 29, at Lornoza.

² Succeeded his brother as fifth Earl of Guilford in 1817, and died unmarried in 1827.

Mr. North, I should turn out something like Lord Stair, who, from total liberty to do whatever comes uppermost, never knows which is uppermost of his ideas: gets into his post-chaise and four, before he determines whether to travel North, South, East, or West, and has now two enormous and magnificent town houses in his possession, without being able to decide which he chuses to keep and live in. I can't say I envy that state of mind

We have been once to the play, a very pretty one it was, too—the "Exile." We saw it at the Opera house, where the Covent Garden company are performing since the burning of their theatre, and till a new one is prepared. It looks very fine, and full of people, but when between the acts the old opera curtain dropped, with the horrid, dirty picture of Mercury and the cow upon it, I really felt half sick, it put me so in mind of Madame Dussek, Signor Righi, and all those bores of Italian singers one yawns at during so many months of every year.

That brave man Captain Seymour of the *Amethyst* must be the very best, too, that ever was in every way. The very first thing he did upon arriving in town, before going to the Admiralty, was to come here and see Papa, and to put him in mind he (Papa) had made his fortune by giving him the *Spitfire*. He came, he said, to shew he was not ungrateful. Papa was delighted with him and his visit.

Thursday, December 1.—We had a very pleasant dinner yesterday, the Morpeths and Harriet, Mr. Crowle, Mr. Tierney,¹ and Mr. Grenville,² who is just arrived for the winter, in high feather and spirits. Poor old Grenvillius, I was quite glad to see him again. Mr. Tierney was remarkably entertaining, as usual. Mr. Crowle and I had a good deal of conversation; he desired me particularly to remember him to his old

¹ George Tierney (1761-1830), the well-known Whig politician and opponent of Pitt, with whom he fought a duel in 1798.

² Thomas Grenville (1755-1846), son of the Right Hon. George Grenville, Prime Minister 1763 to 1765. He was an active Whig Parliamentarian, and collected the fine library which he bequeathed to the British Museum.

friend Bob, to tell you that he often thinks with great pleasure of the excellent water souchie you fished for him once. The word "water souchie" then brought into his mind a chain of ideas about *parsley*, which he immediately began a learned disquisition on. I really laughed to myself at hearing and seeing him holding forth to me in a low voice, and with a sort of important frown on his face, about the very superior merit of a sort of parsley he has just discovered, called Hamburgh parsley, of how he found it out, had some seed sown of it, tasted it in water souchie, and found that it was prodigiously superior to any other parsley. "Now you can't think how good it was; remember the name now, pray, Hamburgh parsley." He thinks of nothing but *la mangeaille*.

SPENCER HOUSE,
December 4, 1808.

. . . We have some very pleasant people to dine with us to-day. My friend Mr. F. North (who, by the way, I ought to tell you, is at least sixty, and besides too frightful;¹ or you really might be alarmed at my violent praises, as I dare say people judge of other poor hearts by their own frequently, hey, Bob?), Mr. Tierney, Mr. Grenville, so much for men of the world, and not the worse for being of the world twenty years back, I assure you. Your Mr. Montagues of the present day I should not so much approve of. Then, as a little science is no bad mixture, I am very glad that besides Mr. Davy² dines with us, one of the cleverest men of the time in matters of natural history, chemistry, and such-like. Mr. Marsden will do very well to *bring him out*, and my uncle will prevent the society from growing silent and heavy at least. . . .

December 5.—Well, my Bob, our dinner turned out, as was natural to expect, several degrees less pleasant than my very high expectations had fancied it would be. Neither Mr. North nor Mr. Tierney could come, and their being much the most agreeable of the invited company, their absence made a great difference.

¹ He was only forty-two.

² Afterwards Sir Humphry, the celebrated man of science and inventor of the safety lamp.

However, it did very well, and Lord Henry Petty,¹ whom I forgot to mention yesterday, is a pleasant man, and kept us going remarkably well.

To-day has been productive of no event, but a great deal of bad news from Spain. It is quite horrible to think of the prospect there. Indeed, people keep up their interest and anxiety about it much longer than is usual in this town; and I can't much wonder at this, for even I feel quite as much occupied by the campaign there as ever I was by any former one of the great Emperor's.

ALTHORP,
December 9, 1808.

MY DEAREST BOB,—The great event, so long wished for, so often put off—our arrival and settlement here—has at length been effected, and here we are at the bottom of our own old valley. . . . We found dear old brother looking quite uncommonly well, grown thin, but bearing exercise better than ever, and in the highest health and spirits. He is, as usual, a complete country gentleman of the most respectable sort. An active magistrate, a good-humoured companion, and what very few indeed of the *squirearchy* are, a sensible, well-informed, and well-read man. All this, you know, he used to be, and he is so now, I think, more than ever. How I do love to think of you all, my dear, dear brothers! All four, I trust, getting on each in his different way, just exactly as I most like and wish you. For, as I should be very sorry if you as a sailor were either a harsh, brutal, unfeeling rough jack-tar or an effeminate milksop, so I should be very sorry if Althorp as an elder son was either an affected, dissipated coxcomb, or indeed a violent, grumbling politician, and even my two little sons, Fritz and George, are schoolboys after my own heart too.

Our youngsters here are just gone off to take a ride on two poneys, with Dan Guillaum between them. I have them a great deal in my room to read and write English, of which I am established teacher, you know; and they are such an amusement to me, I don't know what I shall do when they go back to school. I know

¹ The statesman, afterwards third Marquis of Lansdowne (1780-1863).

very well I was born to be a schoolmistress; I am never so completely pleased with any employment as that of hammering things into children's heads. I have often declared that when (all trades) fail, I shall certainly get my bread by a penny school. I don't quite despair of acquiring almost as much knowledge in my brother's hobby-horse as I did in yours at Ryde, for I already am well acquainted with the names, tho' not the persons, of several hounds. I know all about Cerberus, and Charon, and Fanciful, and many more of the dear creatures, and who knows? before I leave this, ten to one I shall have performed Althorp's office of feeding them myself. But alas! all hobby-horses are not so picturesque, so fine, or so interesting as my own dear sea and ships, and I never shall be able to compare any of the joys of fox-hunting, even tho' the hounds are marked with Althorp's name, to the delight of looking at Spithead, and watching the different operations of those dear men-of-war. The kennel in the park is now inhabited by the pack, and if ever I took long walks, I should live in constant terror of meeting some of those ferocious animals. As much as I know about them, they certainly don't know enough about me to resist their natural desire of tearing one to pieces, an operation which would be very unsatisfactory to me, and I should imagine not very delightful to themselves. I dare say I am not near so good to eat as an old horse.

Grandmama Lucan writes, as usual, incomparable laughing letters to us from town. I hope she writes sometimes to you, her letters are always so excellent.

ALTHORP,
December 18, 1808.

MY DEAREST BOB,—I have been several days without writing to you; but, like all other good people who are in the wrong, I have had many incomparable reasons for it. First, no news; but that is no reason between you, my Bob, and me. Secondly, and this is the real one, a vast multiplicity of things I have to do here. It is amazing to me the crowd of morning visits we have received; and every one Mama is cruel enough to insist on my yawning through with her. Every lady of the county, I am convinced, has been

here by turns. All this is very fine ; it does vastly well to sit comfortably on the old red sofas in the library, and talk for a couple of hours about the bad roads, the next ball, this man's tumble, that woman's *accouchement*; a few yawns are the worst evil belonging to this. But oh, Bob, pity your poor Mam and Sis, when they will have to set out on a bleak morning, over such rough, splashy, squashy, jolting and jumbling roads as ours, to be tossed from place to place, returning all these visits—six, seven, eight miles from one to t'other ; and when you get to the door, not knowing which to wish against most, finding the Lady at home, and having an additional hour added to the time you spend away from home, or finding her not at home, and having not a minute's respite from the jolts of the carriage. Shocking indeed are the various miseries of visiting.

Tuesday, 20th.—We are enjoying now in all its glory the genuine long frost belonging to Christmas. Poor Althorp is obliged to beat for a cock in Nobottle Wood ; he is not able to hunt. Poor I can't take my daily airing on the Northampton road, said road being one sheet of ice, and poor everybody is creeping about from fire to fire, wrapped up in shawls, and shivering and chattering away deplorably. Four icicles, twice as long as my finger, have been hanging since Sunday, glittering in the powerless sun, from the sash of the library window ; a little snow falls every night, and in short we are just the reverse of what you must be now. For all this we are vastly comfortable. The house is so well stoved and fired it is quite a delightful temperature ; the sky is bright and blue ; and all our inmates, though they do shiver and look purple, are in high good humour. None of our company is yet arrived. The Duncannons we expect every hour. Harriet swears she shall leave town at seven o'clock to-morrow morning, and so be here by dinner. Hartington threatens a descent too, soon, but this I rather despair of seeing put into practice. He is somewhat too scatterbrained a youth to bear with our solemn, old-fashioned, steady regularity here ; besides that, Althorp will plague his very life out about going a hunting ; and this he does not approve of much, I fancy.

21st.— . . . The snow has fallen in vast quantities all day, and lies now very deep over everything. This makes us tremble for our poor travelling visitors ; particularly as the long night is already beginning to close in upon us in all its dismal gloom. This has been rather an eventful day. There is a new and very handsome thick carpet put down in the old library ; of course therefore we breakfasted in the drawing-room, while all the old chairs, tables, *what-nots*, and sofas were torn up by the roots to make room for the new-comer. This scene of confusion I escaped from, and was sitting up here writing to Granny and Nan when the soft sound of carriage wheels making their way through the snow drew me to the window, thinking the Duncannons were arriving, instead of whom, behold Hartington's head in the chaise. I went down to be sure it was really him, from whom we this very day had got a letter, putting off his visit. It *was* that steady personage, however, on his way to Derbyshire to a ball. He thought he might come and lunch with us in a flying way with a friend of his, Sir William Rumbold,¹ a great *Priorist*, I fancy. In they came, *took* plenty of cold beef and chicken, resisted all our entreaties to stay longer, and flew off again in their post-chaise in an hour. Hartington looks very fat and well, and promises to return for a longer time in a week or so, to dance at the Northampton ball ; and Sir William says he'll come too. He's H.'s chief favourite just now, and seems somewhat a soft, silly person, but one can't tell properly after an hour's observation, you know, be one ever so clever and learned.

While they were in the room, in came Mr. Rookby, a native, with two sons. One of them, a *malicious*² officer, is a very great county coxcomb, and arrived arrayed in all manner of brilliant colours, with the most regular Brutus head-dress and the highest neck-cloth and lee boards I ever beheld ; stiffer than a poker. It was quite worthy of a farce scene to watch the look of conscious superiority and self satisfaction with which our two London fine gentlemen looked down upon this humble imitator of them ; and from Mr. Rookby's examination of them I expect to hear of his having changed his dress and manner to great

¹ Third baronet ; born 1787, died 1833.

² *I.e.*, militia.

purpose, and of his straining his little short figure to lounge and loll about like Hartington.

ALTHORP,
December 28, 1808.

You can't think how tired I am of snow icicles, shivering and wrapping up, and seeing Althorp like a perturbed spirit walking off his impatience, between the window and the chimney, in silent expectation of a possibility of hunting. We females are very naturally in no such misery ; what with Harriet's harp, Lady Duncannon's little girl, Lady Jones's tapestry work, Grandmama's village business, my children, and Mama's book, each of us is extremely busy, and in something of a constant hurry, which with a little mixture of chattering carries on the day famously.

We have not had many natives here yet, and I own I think we go to work but slowly, for have them all we must. We are to receive Lord Stair to-night : he wrote to Mama word that God and the snow permitting, he should set out from town this morning. Mr. Meakin is here too.

December 31.—We sat down twenty-one to dinner yesterday ; the Sawbridges, Armytages, Mr. Gunning, and our old London friend Mr. Skeffington,¹ were added to our stationary party. We had some musick in the evening. Harriet played as beautifully as usual, and I declare it was quite affecting to see poor old Skeffington, who is as good an Irishman in his heart as anybody, standing close to the piano quite in raptures at some pretty Irish tunes she was playing, and making her repeat them over and over, and watching every note, which seemed to go to his very heart. Nothing I like so much as a little bit of nationality peeping out every now and then.

“ Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is mine own, my native land !”

Do you remember those lines in the “Lay of the Last Minstrel”? How beautiful!

One of the most agreeable people we have in the

¹ Afterwards Sir Lumley Skeffington (1771-1850), the dandy playwright, who is mentioned by Byron in “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.”

house is Lady Jones,¹ which I do own surprized me. I don't know why, I had fancied her quite different from what I find her. She is so very sensible and even entertaining, and so good-humoured too, that I shall be really very sorry when she leaves us.

The boys are now perfectly well; poor dear Gin is not though, her face has been left in a sad state by the eruption which followed those nasty mumps. Dr. Kerr seems to have treated her with great skill, for a wonder. I am almost surprized he did not propose to cut off her face, as a troublesome appendage; for he confessed to me at dinner yesterday that he loved an operation just in the same way that some people love fox-hunting. How very horrible! God knows some people do love fox-hunting in rather an inconceivable way. Believe, if you can, Bob, that there exists a young man, calling himself a gentleman, and I dare say pretending to a liberal education and a polished mind, who lives now at a little ugly cottage in the little ugly village of Nobottle; never can see or speak to any living soul except the day-labourers of the said village; never does read, write, or anything in the said cottage, but put on his red coat to go out to hunt of a morning, take it off and go to bed at night, and probably sleeps on frosty days, spends the *whole* winter in the same profitable manner; and he calls himself a friend of Althorp's. I really longed to look at this man; and he dined here the other day. Of course his society is, in my opinion, not quite upon a par with that of a whipper-in: the latter follows his profession, does his duty, and probably understands his business, and is, in short, a respectable person; but t'other. Oh, what a being! Somebody said that in a chace, first in rank comes the fox, next the hound, next the horse, and last the man. Now tho' I do know and see that dear Althorp has in him much more than enough to put him high, very high, above all his fellow-sportsmen, yet when he covers all that with that muddy red coat, and does his best to forget it—oh, Bob, what a pity!

I must stop, but first I will put down a story of Dutens,² which, by the way, I don't vouch for in point

¹ Widow of Sir William Jones, the great linguist. He had been Lord Spencer's tutor

² Dutens (1730-1812) was an old French clergyman, an *émigré*, who had settled in England after the Revolution.

of truth. He preached an English sermon . . . ; and after he had concluded the argument, he added, "Now I have *fineeshed* my three *pints*, I must now proceed to draw a little *more ale* . . ." I conclude you will understand he meant *points* and *moral*, but they say his congregation really thought he was going to tap a barrel of ale for them, and were disappointed when nothing happened but a *con-tin-ua-shione* of broken English.

January 1, 1809.—You are the first person to whom I write with this new date, my Bob. I wish you from the bottom of my heart every happiness, every blessing for this year, and for many, many more.

CHAPTER III

1809

THE letters in this chapter give a very vivid picture of the questions and events which were dominant in London society in 1809. Chief among these was the progress of the war in the Peninsula.

Sir John Moore's success in repulsing the French at Corunna, and the return of Sir Arthur Wellesley to Portugal in chief command, mark a turning-point in the struggle, every incident of which is eagerly looked for at home.

The year 1809 was also memorable in the Spencer family, as it witnessed the commencement of Lord Althorp's parliamentary career.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
January 24, 1809.

Here we are all established and settled in the metropolis. I wish I could describe it so as to do it justice, but I am afraid my ink is not black enough nor thick enough, and my spirits are too good for me to write anything half dark and dreary enough to be like London. As I now sit in the painted room, I see positively nothing out of the window; the sea might be there for aught I know to the contrary. All this, however, don't keep folks at home; and Mama's levée is as usual frequented by all the usual visitors; they arrive cross as ten sticks, dripping, soaked through, and

shivering, in great-coats, and snow-shoes ; and there remain for hours. I can't wonder at people's desire to meet and talk now tho', when we have all this battle of Corunna¹ to talk about. What a retreat, and what a death was Sir John Moore's ! And don't it appear as if every man belonging to us, as soon as he begins to rise above all others, is taken off ? Nelson, Abercrombie, so many, many more, and now the best land officer we had left. How dreadful is the state we are now in, without any returns ; the anxiety for their arrival is really painful to see ! All these circumstances and every other about this dear-bought victory, make out the whole of conversation, as you may suppose.

Henry Cavendish is very slightly wounded, and I suppose will have to set out again immediately, for incredible and really mad as it may appear, it is true that another large army is going to be sent directly to Spain. I wonder how they can persuade them to go.

We have a bold and heroic intention of going with much more moderation into the gay world this summer than the last. I was so completely knocked up by last season both in body and mind, that I have no sort of objection to a slackening of our zeal for routs and parties, this one ; and I am so experienced a person, I think my opinion may be trusted and credited. But I promise you I will pretend, when it is proper to do so, to regret all such pastimes, for fear of giving room for conjectures and suppositions that I must be making Greek verses, or perhaps magical spells at home, as a substitute ; and moreover, I promise to give you as much assembly talk as I can collect or pick up anyhow. Nothing has begun yet ; we have not a card on the chimney-piece. The opera is very bad, and only one theatre for the play you know ; because of Covent Garden Theatre being burnt, and its temporary successor, the little Haymarket Theatre, being without private boxes, so that one can go to the play only every other week. All the subscribers to our box are very cross about it.²

¹ Fought January 16, 1809. Sir John Moore was killed early in the day.

² In those days nobody sat in what are now the stalls, and boxes were held as opera-boxes are to-day.

February 6.— . . . Lady Hood¹ has been here often; she and her husband dined with us on Saturday. She is not looking well, but very handsome for all that, and I like her better and better every time I see her. I should be quite angry if Sir Samuel Hood's wife were not a very handsome, sensible, superior woman. On the day the officers returned from Spain (they) were thanked in the House; the land officers first. Each had a handsome speech addressed to them by the Speaker, and each got up to return thanks in their turn. Sir Samuel then was thanked for his exertions; and till he rose to speak all was quiet and orderly; but as soon as he got up, the whole House burst into a roar of applause, so that he was quite delayed by it from beginning his speech. I quite admire the House of Commons for it; tho' I own they seem to me to be just now made sad fools of, by this respectable and dignified business about the Duke of York and his mistress they are degrading their journal with.

This was the trial of Mrs. Clarke, who was accused of selling military commissions and obtaining whole instead of half-pay pensions for any soldier who bribed her sufficiently. The Duke, being Commander-in-Chief, was not unnaturally accused of connivance in these proceedings; but it was subsequently proved that though he had been guilty of great weakness and negligence in allowing her to have so much influence in the appointments, he was quite ignorant of the means she employed.

The *Annual Register* says of this trial: "The inquiry into the Duke of York interested the public more deeply than any question had done since that concerning the succession to the crown, and the limitations of regal power. The attentions of all ranks were more or less directed to what was going on in the House of

¹ Wife of Admiral Sir Samuel Hood, who had greatly distinguished himself as second in command of the Baltic Fleet. Lady Hood was daughter of Lord Seaforth. After Sir Samuel's death in 1814 she married the Right Hon. James Stewart, and died 1862.

Commons. There was no one that now seemed to think it of any consequence what was done either in the prosecution of the war or negotiation for peace, until that affair should be settled. The eyes of the whole nation were directed to its rulers in general, to the whole of the Government: King, Lords, and Commons. . . .”

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
February 13, 1809.

The two boys are at Eton. They can't get to school from Mr. Godley's house because of the floods, which have been really tremendous all over England. I won't describe them, however, being somewhat bored with the topick, which has been the resource of all visitors too dull to talk of other things for the last month. The only thing upon which people do speak now is the examination of Mrs. Clarke before the bar of the House of Commons. It is a most infamous, scandalous, and degrading business, look at it anyhow. They say it will all soon be stopped by a vote of the House in compliment to the Duke of York, praising him, blaming all that has been done against him; describing Mrs. Clarke as no better than she should be, and saying she has told nothing but lies; and that then, Parliament having *doré la pillule*, his Royal Highness is to swallow it, and resign his office with as good a grace as he can, and retire to *otium sine dignitate* for the rest of his royal life.¹ But then other people say that some of the members of the House will not allow this grand vote to pass at all, having some foolish notions about them, and pretending to think no praise ought to be given when none is deserv' . . . but I won't finish so treasonable a sentence.² I only say that these silly, scrupulous people may oppose the vote, and then the resignation

¹ The vote was passed, and he resigned his post in March of this year, but resumed it again in 1812, and held it till his death in 1827.

² Lord Althorp and many others of the young members took this line.

would be a bitter bolus to swallow indeed. Which-ever way it is to end, it certainly had better never have been so publickly begun, for it must be grating to any man's feelings to have his private character turned inside out, when nothing very bright is to be seen in it. From corruption as a minister he is quite innocent, everybody agrees. I hope you have the newspapers, or you won't understand all this.

HOLYWELL,
March 20, 1809.

I told you of our scheme of spending the spring in the country, and it has now been carried into execution for a fortnight which Gin and I have been spending here. Grandmama Lucan and Nan have been at the Hotel de Bingham, and Althorp chiefly on the high road between London and Northampton flying from hunting to voting, and from voting to hunting again, in his usual way. Granny L. is quite recovered and enjoying her usual merry spirits, tho' indulging herself in her usual deep, sad groans over the state of affairs, the Duke of York's long, tiresome business, the prospect of revolutions, combustions and ruin, which all come over her about five times a day, and then are driven out of her head by the first ray of sunshine which falls on her geranium-pots, or any other cheerful event of equal importance, which sets her laughing again.

Now to Bath—poor Bath! Do you remember it? I remember you there, just arrived from Cambridge, much the finest college coxcomb I ever saw, with yards of neckcloth, and over that a coloured silk handkerchief, a cape that I am sure was cannon-ball proof, and totally prevented you from moving; a round pair of shoulders, and a Brutus headdress of formidable height, which never was approached but by the brush.¹ Mama drew you this figure, don't you recollect? and stuck you over the chimney. She drew me too, much in the likeness of a carter's whip, bent quite double, and in the first extasy of wearing a long train. Well, the present party at Bath are very different sort of people. The old couple amusing themselves in a childless *tête-à-tête*,

¹ *I.e.*, uncurled.

quite a new thing for them, poor souls! They *pretend* in their letters that they bear it very well, but I dare say if the truth was known, they are somewhat bored, and long for some children to keep the peace between them. However, in one respect their expedition has answered to admiration. Papa is so infinitely better, that we expect to see him quite comfortably well: the waters have done wonders this time, bless them for it. All comfort and happiness *au sein de la famille*, depend so totally on the patriarch's health and good spirits, that you may well conceive how delighted all the family is at this improvement.

Of Althorp I can tell you nothing particular. He is very well, and as dear a man as ever. He pays us little flying visits *en passant*, as he rides up and down to and from the debates, and seems very eager both to hunt down the foxes and the Duke of York. Now, tho' last not least, I come to Number One. I am in perfect health, an please you, and much the better for being out of town. I ride out on a donkey about the fields, and enjoy the very smell of the earth and grass to an extravagant degree. My Grandmother is always tramping about, visiting poor people, or ordering improvement in her garden. We rise pretty early, dine at three, and go to bed at half-past ten. Miss Trimmer¹ is a very sensible woman, extremely well read, with a good deal of talk, and in high good-humour. Nan, who has been seeing a little of the world in town, brings us news from it. Everybody was scandalized as they ought to be with the dreadful *esclandre* of Lord Paget and Lady Charlotte Wellesley;² but everybody has almost forgotten it, as it happened a good ten days ago, and nothing is now talked of but this endless debate,³ of which I am somewhat tired. Nan has been saving all the newspapers for you since it began, a nasty story of corruption and profligacy it is indeed.

¹ Sister-in-law of Mrs. Trimmer, the authoress. She had been governess in the Spencer family.

² They eloped together. Lady Charlotte was the daughter of the first Earl Cadogan, and wife of Henry Wellesley, afterwards Lord Cowley. He divorced her, and she married in 1810 Lord Paget, who was afterwards first Marquis of Anglesey and Viceroy of Ireland. He lost a leg at Waterloo.

³ On the Duke of York and Mrs. Clarke.

But it may, must, do good ; it has already, for the King has expelled the Duke of Kent's mistress¹ from his palace at Kensington, where she occupied *eighty* rooms, and the Duke of Clarence's² from Bushey Park, in consequence of all this bustle. It does the greatest credit to his judgment and firmness, and I am glad he has done it.

Only think of my knowing nothing about you since last November ! It is too long a great deal for anybody to bear. God bless you ever and everywhere, my dearest Bob ! By the way, how many pretty letter-endings there are among the Duke of York's performances—quite ingenious and pretty ! “Yours and yours only”—that sounds well—and many more ; but I don't think we'll adopt them from that nasty, foolish collection of trash. How he must wish he and his pen and ink had been at the bottom of the sea, when he saw it all in print !

ALTHORP,

March 27, 1809.

I assure you we are quite worthy of your shooting anecdotes. Papa talks of them with a little odd mixture of admiration and envy, and we *females* look upon them as a famous proof of excellent health and sound ankles. I will not rest till I have sent you out some books or other. There is a sad scarcity of new ones worth reading. . . . Nannette will send you, or has sent you, plenty of reading stuff by this time—the whole series of the newspaper accounts of the Duke of York's business, and at the end is a nice *bonne bouche* for you, dear Althorp's first speech in the House of Commons. It was really excellent, and we hear so from all quarters—the most impartial quarters—it was just what it ought to be.³

Well, I must bring you home a little, so fancy yourself at Althorp House last Saturday, March 25, and now watch the several events of the day. About three

¹ Madame St. Laurent.

² Mrs. Jordan, the actress.

³ Lord Althorp moved an amendment to a resolution expressing the conviction of the House of the Duke of York's innocence. Lord Althorp's motion was considered too severe, and was negatived. If agreed to, it would have prevented the Duke from being restored to his office.



Lavinia, Countess Spencer.



o'clock in rides Viscount Althorp from Pytchley. He of course goes first to the kennels, receives the cordial greetings of all the hounds, is well jumped upon by all the dirty puppies, and then comes down to the house, one sheet of mud in consequence ; there he stays, walking the quarter-deck in the library, and possibly just thinking a little by chance of the congratulations he should receive from them on this famous maiden speech of his. He hears a coach coming round the court, and runs to the hall door, where he meets his two amiable sisters, all stiff and muzzed after their journey from Holywell. He handed us properly out of the carriage, and after we and Mlle. Müller had taken a survey of the library we came up and dressed, to be ready for the next coachful. We had not dressed long when the door bell again rung, and in came the old couple from Bath ; there followed plenty of greetings and kissings and "How well you look, Papa!" "How fat you are grown, Sal!" and "Here we are again, quite safe." All these and such-like speeches we made in chorus over and over again for the first ten minutes, after which we all began screaming for dinner, and the welcome Venables announced it. Mr. Ocheda then made his appearance ;¹ he had come down from London two days before. We all dined in high spirits. At eight o'clock the family party was made as complete as it can, alas ! be, by the entrance of the two dear boys from Eton with Mr. Godley. They were looking uncommonly well, and we are now all of us enjoying this lovely spring weather together. The boys study very hard, six hours each day, and the rest of the time ride, walk, and run about as merry as grigs. We are going to be much taken up by Mr. Tatham, the architect, who is to come for a few days to decide upon the plan of the new gateway into the park. All the plantations are already made, and the road will be really quite a pretty one, and not so up and down hill as it is now. Then the new flower-garden, which now occupies the space called "the wilderness," is another object for us old ones of the family to amuse ourselves with. It is beautiful—

¹ The librarian at Althorp for many years.

nothing less. Lord¹ and Lady Abercorn are spending this year in Ireland ; Lady Maria is left in London with Lady Aberdeen. This circumstance is the only one which makes me regret having been obliged to leave town, as I can't help thinking that, had we been able to stay, I should have got acquainted with her, and I know very few things I wish for more ; tho' after all, when I consider that in my situation it is almost impossible for me to get intimate with anybody who is not a relation or a very great friend of Mama's, and that indeed I should not be comfortable in such an intimacy, however pleasant it might be in other respects. On the other hand, Lady Maria's admirable character can hardly be properly valued unless one gets intimate with her, and I am inclined to change my mind, and think that it is one of those things I am accustomed always to wish for and never to attain. These are little trifling womanish reasonings, and I don't know whether you, who are as independant as manhood and seamanship can make you, will understand them. But pray believe I never shall abstain from making acquaintance with Lady M. if circumstances allow me to do so ; and believe, too, that I am far from envying, tho' I may admire, your manly independence, as, if I possessed a bit more of it than I do, I am well aware I should be in fifty scrapes and twice as many puzzles a day. "The back is made to bear the burden," you know, and I suppose some faculty, like a sort of sixth sense, is given to you to help you thro' the world, kicking it on before you as you go. As for us females, we have as a compensation our sixth sense too—the faculty of bending and submitting, and being led and commanded, and being perfectly happy and *free-feeling* all the time ; so I fancy our situations are equally good.

ALTHORP,
April 16, 1809.

We heard to-day of what we cannot but be very glad of—Courtenay Boyle is appointed Commissioner of the . . .² *Tenez je m'embrouille !* if you gave me a

¹ First Marquis of Abercorn. His daughter, Lady Maria, was much admired by Bob Spencer ; she died unmarried in 1814. Lady Aberdeen was her sister.

² He was appointed a Transport Service Commissioner.

thousand pounds, or even a little peep at you, which is better worth having, I could not tell you what Board he is Com'r. of. What I know is, that it will bring him £1,000 a year, and enable him to reside in town. . . .

Such is my poverty of news, that I have not the heart to go on upon my own unassisted budgett of ideas; so I will copy out a story for you from my Grandmother Lucan's letter of to-day, which has made us all laugh immoderately. It is about a relation of ours by my Grandmother L.'s side, a young gentleman of nineteen or twenty. Now begins my Grandmother: "At the Cambridge Vacation last autumn the guardians of my hopeful nephew, Sir A. Molesworth,¹ hugged themselves at having found a young and well-conducted gentleman who was going to Scotland, and with whom Sir A. wished to go. It was to keep him out of harm's way, and they jumped at it; so off they went, and were only a fortnight out of England. But much may be achieved in a short time by a bright genius. They came home again, and all was well till a letter arrived to announce a trifling event which had occurred during the two days they had staid at Edinburgh, to your cousin. I give you twelve guesses. 'Did he tumble over a rock and break his neck?' 'No, Nanny, worse: guess again.' 'Did they blow him to shivers with gunpowder, like Lord Darnley of old?' 'Pho, pshaw! that's nothing; guess again.' 'Was he taken in by sharpers and blacklegs?' 'Oh, Nanny, you burn; not by black-legs, but by white legs; and as to the sharpers, why, there you are right.'

"The travellers arrived at Edinburgh; staid there *two days*, and only two, preparatory to their tour in the Highlands. The Scotch are jovial and merry, and hospitable to strangers, whom they *take in*, as we are enjoined. They were the second night invited to a ball, where the Baronet danced with a simple, pleasant virgin of about thirty years of age, who was kind enough to make no objection to his being but eighteen.

¹ Sir Arscott Molesworth, grandson of a sister of Lady Lucan (1789-1823). He married Mary, daughter of Patrick Brown, of Edinburgh. Sir William Molesworth, the Radical statesman, was his eldest son.

The ball over, he went home, and next day set off for the Highlands ; returned thro' Edinburgh, and the morning after, my dear nephew was waked by a message that Miss Brown and the parson waited for him. Up got my dear nephew, followed the man like a goose, and *was married* like an idiot. On the morrow they left Scotland, the friend in ye basket¹ all the while. Not a word had his companion blinked to him of his exploit, nor to anybody else when he got home, till the modest bride wrote to claim her spouse, to the utter surprise, astonishment, and dismay of all friends. Match this if ye can, ye novel-mongers ! He says he proposed to her at the ball, but she refused to marry him then, to be sure, unprepared, without witnesses, etc. ; but she told him she would give him time to consider while scrambling over the mountains. For nobody should say she had taken him in ; they must be sad liars who do. The name of Brown is not one of the illustrious of Scotland, tho' they seem to be opulent ; for Captain Brown, her father, a distinguished warrior, left her mother and her to live upon, the interest of £5,000, which ample fortune is to be Lady Molesworth's after the death of ye mother. Fal-lol-de-rol !"

April 27.—. . . Althorp writes constantly from town. He is up to his very ears in politicks. Ever since his speech he is grown quite keen about them, and the line of his conduct he has taken is so perfectly honest and sensible that it is a great comfort to us all. He is very highly thought and spoken of by everybody, and I am quite delighted he is getting more known. We all know so well that the more he is examined into, the better he must be thought of.

28th.—Oh, my Bob, what a noble, gallant, fine creature is Lord Cochrane ! We have known of his glorious conduct in the Basque Roads for some days.² But I am ashamed to say I understood so little of the *Gazette* accounts, what with batteries here and batteries there, and soundings and booms and signals, that it was all higgledy-piggledy in my head till to-day. But now we have all the details of Lord Cochrane's

¹ *I.e.*, in total ignorance.

² Lord Cochrane drove the French fleet ashore by means of fire-ships, as it lay in Aix Roads, on April 11, 1809.

own adventures; and, to be sure, he is a real hero. It is one of those stories that make one's blood run cold, and rouzes all the best feelings one has—of admiration and wonder. I am quite delighted he has a red ribbon. I don't know what he don't deserve, indeed. Oh, those bluejackets! . . .

A change was taking place at this time in political parties, and we find the first mention of the Reform party. Lord Althorp, who had entered Parliament as a Whig, holding their moderate opinions, joined the Reformers, to the great distress of his family, who feared at first he might be led into extremes such as his sister describes.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

ALTHORP,
May 9, 1809.

. . . We do little but bless our stars that we are here and not in town, for the ferment that happy place is in must be quite sufficient to distract one. Everybody now is either an alarmist or a reformer; they are new names which have driven "Ministerialist" and "Opposition man" out of fashion, and I almost regret the old humdrum way, for at least formerly one set of people were happier than kings, enjoying their places and kicking the world before them, and the others had the satisfaction of grumbling by profession, and the happy prospect of some day or other having a corner of the bed of roses to themselves. But now everybody is in a constant fury. Your true alarmist, generally possessing a snug, sinecure place, or a tight little pension in a corner, keeps on screaming and howling over the danger of the nation; revolutions beginning, a set of young hot-headed boys attacking every part of the Constitution, and all sorts of "phantoms of danger, death, or dread," are always swimming before his eyes; and he would have everything hushed up, smothered, and forgotten, always

excepting the payment of his salary. Your reformer, on the contrary, is poking into all the dirty corners, routing out corruptions and abuses, till of course he gets into such a rage of disgust that he stops at nothing, and would be, like our friend Dr. Kerr, for breaking open the head, taking out the brain in a spoon, sifting it thro', and then packing it back again, while the miserable patient might die ten times over during the operation. Some dear, moderate, right-headed, honest, manly men there are, to be sure, who would reform gently, but yet steadily, who have nothing to do with mobs or violence, but yet are so pure, so thoroughly good, that they cannot bear the sight of corruption. Of these men there are but few; there is but one I am sure of, and that one is our dear Althorp; nothing can be much better than his whole conduct in these difficult times.

Oh, the Battle of Rohr!¹ So there is an end of poor Austria. Well, to be sure, every creature must have expected it, when Bony and his two millions of money were on one side, and those wretched Germans on the other. . . .

15th.—To-day has been a fine noisy one for us, as there is a privilege belonging to it. All the farmers may come and shoot rooks between eleven and two o'clock on this morning every year, so that the popping of the guns never ceased for three hours, and we might have fancied ourselves in a besieged town. Of course, we, the garrison, took very good care of making no sallies; not a nose was put out of the doors till the bombardment was over; and Nan, even at her home station, the drawing-room, started at every shot as if it had been aimed at her. The rooks are in sad confusion after it, croaking and fluttering about.

We are expecting Althorp to-day; he has been away now a whole month, and I shall not be very sorry to see him again. If he don't bring both his pockets and all his head full of news, I shall be very angry. But I am afraid all his news is out of the House of Commons and discussions on parliamentary reform, which I am

¹ Now known as the Battle of Eckmühl, fought on April 2, 1809. Napoleon routed the Austrian army and took Ratisbon.

dead sick of, to tell you the truth, and had rather never hear mentioned again. . . .

19th.—I am up to my eyes in village business and bustles ; to be sure, a village less like those in Arcadia than poor, dear Brington never existed ! Every single thing one does in it produces the contrary effect from what one expects, and if ever I learn, by dint of sad experience, to manage our concern there properly, I shall certainly be well able to guide the affairs of the nation ; for I defy any nation to afford a Minister more puzzling difficulties, more thankless, or rather useless, worries than our swains and nymphs hereabouts.

Althorp is not yet come. He seems to enjoy himself amazingly this year in town ; and, to own the truth, I can't say I should very much wonder if it turned out that some little reason, some good motive or other, kept him. But, however, be that as it may, he seems as happy as a king by his letters. . . . Oh dear, dear, if I should have more to tell you in my next letter ! But I shan't, I dare say ; at all events, don't answer this incomprehensible bit. . . . If there really is anything in this stay of Althorp's in town, you shall know the minutest details ; if there is nothing, which is more likely, you shall hear no more.

The key to these thrilling conjectures appears in the next letter. There was reason enough for excitement, for Miss Tilney Long was the greatest heiress of the day, and, as Lady Sarah says, very attractive besides. She married, in 1812, Mr. Wellesley Pole, afterwards fourth Earl of Mornington, who ran through every penny she possessed.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
June 12, 1809.

. . . Before I say anything else, I must get rid of a weight on my conscience, which weight, I believe, is in part the reason of my long, long silence. Did you ever receive my last letter ? That's what I would give a good deal to know. However, I must take it for

granted. Well, that letter ended with a very silly sentence I wish I had not written, about Althorp. I told you we suspected there was some good reason for his staying so much in town this season, and I told you I would explain in my next letter. This is ye next letter, and now for my explanation. We did suspect some good reason kept Althorp in town; we even heard reports of what the reason was. We heard he seemed to be carrying on a flirtation with no less a person than Miss Tilney Long, who has so many advantages, being extremely pretty, very clever, sensible, well-educated, and a great heiress besides, that we could not help pricking up our ears. However, it is ending in smoke. We do think there has been *something* in the reports, but I have not a doubt that it is coming to nothing, so you will hear no more of it from me. Althorp dined here yesterday, and is to-day gone back to London to caper about for another week or two; for the ball season is but just begun, and he is, as usual, *keeping himself down* for his hunters by dancing most perseveringly.

WIMBLEDON,
June 14, 1809.

... I have just been with Mammy at a true Wimbledon levée. Mr. and Mrs. Allen and Mr. Brunel¹ came over from Battersea, and Mr. Hatchett from Roehampton. I don't know whether this last-mentioned is an acquaintance of yours. He is a very agreeable man, a great *savant*, chemist, mineralogist, and so forth, but no pedant, and very good-humoured. As to poor, dear Brunel, his visits are always as long as the tide chuses; for he walks here from the river, and till the tide serves to go back for the boat part of his excursions, here he stays, *coûte que coûte*. I always like to see him, but I must own it is difficult to make any degree of pleasure counterbalance a visitation of a whole day. There he goes home again, by my window.

By the way, I have long promised to send you some books; I have two in my eye I think you will like. One is "Les Mémoires de Sully." He, you know, was

¹ The great engineer. He was at this time superintending the construction of the Thames Tunnel.

First Minister to Henri Quatre of France. It is a book very useful in point of history, and written in a manly, sensible style ; it gives one so very high an opinion of Sully himself, and makes one so very fond of the King, that it amused me almost as much as a novel. . . . Well, that's my useful book. Now, as to t'other, I am now reading it. It is by Miss Edgeworth, and quite worthy of her, which is saying everything. The title is "Tales of Fashionable Life." I have not yet finished the first ; they say it is the best ; to be sure, no other can be better. It is an Irish story, and so excellent an account of Irish character I never read, written by a good Irishwoman too, so that it describes the dear country not in a caricature style, but, I dare say, quite correctly. . . .

Now I come to answer the question which you put to me about enlarging the circle of your correspondents by writing and being written to by Fanny and Harriet.¹ . . . I think it an excellent scheme. Fanny is ready enough to do it, being a very regular correspondent ; and I shall charge her to take the fashionable world into her peculiar care—not a match, not a flirtation, not a ball, not an assembly shall escape her care. As to Harriet, she passes for an irregular correspondent. I never found her so ; and her letters—oh dear ! they are so much better worth reading than any ever were, that I quite delight in thinking you will receive them. They really are perfect.

Of course, you know all about the match of Mrs. Lamb² at Devonshire House. She has taken a house somewhere near Lincoln's Inn Fields, and is already behaving so well, and so judiciously, that it justifies the good opinion I had of her always, and makes one hope she will be very happy.

Tuesday, June 20. — I have thought of another French book, which I am sure you will like ; you should read it before Sully. It is called "L'Esprit de la Ligue," and tho' it is a book of history, the style is so light and pleasant, and the time it describes so

¹ Lady Frances Pratt and Lady Harriet Cavendish.

² Daughter of the fifth Duke of Devonshire and Lady Elizabeth Foster, who became his second wife. She went by the name of Caroline St. Jules till her marriage with the Hon. George Lamb, brother of Lord Melbourne.

interesting, that I am not afraid of promising you will be entertained by it. As to Miss Edgeworth, we all talk of nothing else now. The first story, is to be sure the best, but the others, and the last particularly, are incomparable too. I would send you more English books, if I knew one good for anything; but that I do not. Pray, have you ever read thro' those you have got? The *Spectator*, *Tatler*, and *Guardian*. I am reading the *Spectator* regularly through, as it came out, one number a day, and am delighted with the plan, tho' I had read most of it before.

By the way, Althorp, I must tell you, has left town for good this season; and this may be a proof to you of the falsehood of any reports you may hear of his going to be married. People have been quite unusually busy in that way this year, and no report ever was so general, I do think. We have been worried to death with it, but it will now drop, I trust, as he is no longer to be seen in town, and will be forgot of course, for "out of sight, out of mind," is never so true as when applied to London acquaintances. . . .

WIMBLEDON,
June 27, 1809.

This house only contains Mama and Gin and I, just at this moment, Papa being gone out in a ditto suit of dingy brown fustian, with a white hat on his head, and a gun in his hand, to make war on a wretched hare, who was so ill-advised this morning as to walk across the lawn in full view of the enemy, soon after breakfast. The effect of this imprudence was, of course, a call to arms and Astell, and the grand expedition sallied out two hours ago.

Saturday, July 1.—The Bessboroughs dine here today, and with them comes that object of everybody's compassion (of the sort of compassion which is no kin to love), poor Willy Ponsonby, for so he is always called. I never saw so fine a lesson as he is to warn one against idleness. He is going to *promener ses ennuiés* to Spain, which is now considered in no other light than a good lounge by young gentlemen who can't get up in time for the barouche club and eat too much to be pedestrians or boxers, and therefore can find nothing to do in the wide world but sleep, yawn,

stuff and whisper the winter through, and then go and give a favourable specimen of English character to the Spaniards, in the dead time for London, from August to October.

Thursday, July 6.— . . . Yesterday we went to Laleham¹ to dine with my uncle and his six dear children ; and we reckon this a very frisky undertaking, considering the weather, which added thunder to its other advantages. We were well rewarded, for it is no small pleasure to see so nice a family as those children are. The two boys are at a small school close to their home, and were sent for to meet us. They are younger than ours, and very fine fellows indeed ; the eldest particularly has the frankest, openest, most affectionate manners I ever saw No, not quite neither, but *out of home, my own home*, I never saw finer boys.

We are to-day going to town ; we shall sleep there, and go from thence to-morrow to dine at Lord Jersey's at Osterley ; it is said to be one of the finest places in England—houses, that is ; the park must be frightful, as it is near Brentford. . . .

Wimbledon, Saturday.—Here am I now settled again at the green table, to give you an account of our doings. Thursday we went to town. Friday morning was all taken up with masters, and what with singing myself hoarse and drawing myself blind, and listening to Gin's twanging and strumming her passages on the harp and piano till I was near deaf, I got finely tired by four o'clock, and settled myself on a great chair in my salon, reading "The Shipwreck," a poem you perhaps know, by Falconer, a sailor, which I had long wished to read. I was just got into it, and beginning to enjoy my rest, when in ran Sophia my maid, bringing the tremendous news that the carriage for us to go to Osterley was to be ready at half-past four, and that it was then twenty-five minutes past, therefore I had but five minutes for my toilet. You can imagine how I scampered upstairs, and performed the important operation of dressing from head to foot in a masterly,

¹ Lord Lucan's place, near Staines. His eldest son was afterwards the third Lord Lucan, the cavalry leader in the Crimean War ; he died in 1888.

or rather *mistressly*, style, in less than ten minutes; then flew downstairs, and was just in time, for the carriage and I arrived in Papa's and Mama's sight at the same moment. In we got, and jogged and jolted for almost two hours, thro' Brentford, and all its nastiness, to Osterley, where we landed safe about an hour too soon for dinner. The drawing-room in which we were received, and in which they always sit, is 10 or 11 feet longer, and I think much broader than the gallery at Althorp. It is 130 feet long, and yet by means of two huge chimney pieces, a profusion of sofas, chairs and tables of all sizes, a billiard table, books, pictures, and a pianoforte, it looks as comfortable and as well filled as a small room would. All the rest of the house is of a piece with this room—immense, magnificent, and very comfortable. The park is frightful. Our dinner table was very pleasant. The Bessboroughs, Duncannons, Lord and Lady Cowper, Lord Erskine, Lord Stair, Lord Albemarle, Mr. Tierney, ourselves and Lord and Lady Jersey. We saw and admired extremely little Lord Villiers¹ *l'enfant de la maison*. He is fourteen months old, and a very beautiful baby, the exact image of Lord Jersey, and doated upon by both his father and mother. We came home to Spencer House "in thunder, lightening, and in rain," by eleven o'clock at night, and were not sorry to rest ourselves at home again.

RYDE,
July 25, 1809.

Here we are, my dearest Bob, actually arrived and established at "mine own romantick town," and here am I going to write you an account of our journey. You must now transport yourself to the dicky of our carriage, and travel down with us from Wimmy to Liphook, where we slept on the 19th, and from whence we departed early on the next day, and arrived at Portsmouth about twelve. Now you must shake off all the ideas of quiet, fresh air, and rest, which may be in your mind, to fancy yourself in the town of Portsmouth, *au beau milieu* of the fair, the expedition,

¹ George Augustus Frederick (1808-1859), afterwards sixth Earl of Jersey.

and Lord Gambier's court-martial.¹ The street was one continued rattle and gingle, produced by bells ringing, organs grinding, wild beasts roaring, and all the variety of noises attending booths, crockery shops, giants, dwarfs, monkeys, women without legs, girls with pink eyes, fat children, and two-headed cows, which, besides puppet shows and dancing dogs, were drawn up in battle array, to be looked at by the shoals of drunken people of every sex and age, who were reeling and bellowing about from one sight to another. Then *mettez vous dans la tête* that twenty-two sail of the line and innumerable small craft were filling the harbour ; that 1,500 men—soldiers, I mean—were on board of these, and that every one of the officers, naval and military, I do believe, was taking his pleasure in the same town. Besides that, Lord Gambier, who is going to be tried, had brought plenty more, both of busy and idle folks, to this same identical place. Now conceive what we thought of it. We who had been spending a month of delicious quiet at Wimmy, and had almost forgotten what bustle meant. I really believe even Mama, bad sailor as she is, was glad to get out of it into the barge which brought us to this quiet island. But bustle followed us even here. This house is quite close to the street, and one hears all the noise which can be conjured up in the place, besides which, it was not half finished when we came, and was enlivened by plenty of plasterers, carpenters, and paperers, fitting up the drawing-room and staircase. Our poor little street too was filled with some of the loungers from the fleet and army, and with the Russian prisoners from their fleet which lies at the Motherbank. The expedition sailed magnificently this morning. How thankful we are that we have no relations in it ! For Heaven knows where it will go, what it will do, or when it will return ; it is the largest ever sent out, they say.

This was the disastrous expedition to Walcheren which set out under the command of Lord Chatham,

¹ He was tried on a charge brought against him by Lord Cochrane. They had had a difference on the occasion of the action in the Aix Roads. Lord Gambier was acquitted.

brother of William Pitt (Sir R. Strachan commanding the fleet), in order to destroy the French arsenals on the Scheldt. All it achieved, after much loss, was the capture of Flushing.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
August 26, 1809.

We are all as proud as possible of one of our relations, whom I certainly must own I expected nothing like military renown from, and I don't know why neither, except because of having known him all my life merely as *le meilleur enfant du monde*. I mean Frederick Ponsonby,¹ who has been distinguishing himself most nobly at Talavera, keeping nine French squadrons in check for six hours with only two squadrons of his, and very little loss. His Colonel praises him in the most delightful way, and it does one good to read his own account of it; it is so simple and modest. His drop of Marlborough blood is coming out, and I am really quite happy at it.

Now I must tell you of a match settled and declared. Miss Rennell—our old friend, Miss Rennell—is to be married to Captain Rodd of the *Indefatigable*. It is a long-wished-for thing, and the *futur* certainly deserves to be called by the name of his ship; he has been so constant. I wish there were a little more prospect of fortune. She of course has nothing or near it, and he I believe can only have prize-money, but I dare say she will be an excellent wife and manage very well for him.

To-day we have all the Pembrokes and Herberts that exist to dinner; they are living at Cowes. Catinka has a fine, fat baby called Lisette,² of five months old; not over pretty, but healthy and merry. She is as brown as her elder sister Lady Di³ is fair.

¹ Second son of third Earl of Bessborough, afterwards a Major-General and K.C.B. He died in 1837.

² Afterwards Countess of Clanwilliam.

³ Lord Pembroke's daughter by his first wife; afterwards Countess of Normanton.

Lord Herbert is quite a man, handsome, though not quite so much as his father must have been, and somewhat too cold and *high* in his manner. He is not yet at college.

Sunday, 27th. — William,¹ Caroline, and Augustus Lamb arrived here next door to us yesterday. They are quite well and as yet very well pleased with us and Ryde; but as they have been living almost a London life at Cowes, with the Duke of Gloucester, dinners, balls, and evening parties in succession, I expect they will find us uncommonly dull before long.

30th. — There is no describing the degree of dissipation in which we are living. No day passes without some visitors, some party or some event of one kind or other, which takes away all possibility of sitting down to one steady employment for an hour. This morning, for instance, I went out thinking to stay five minutes on the pier and stare at five beautiful men-of-war who were coming in from Flushing with French prisoners, full sail and attracting the admiration of all Ryde. But when I got there, I was so amused with the brilliancy of the day and the bustle of the scene, crowded with boats landing or putting off, sailors with telescopes, fine ladies with parasols, and all busy or amusing themselves, that on I staid for two hours, and after all this you need not be told I am as happy as the day is long. . . . Papa has actually concluded his bargain for a beautiful field, and in two years there will be a house on it.

The antagonism between Canning and Castlereagh, which led to the retirement of both from the Cabinet, and to a duel fought on Wimbledon Common in September of this year, had greatly shaken the ministry, which was finally dissolved by the death of the Prime Minister, the Duke of Portland, on October 30, 1809. Mr. Perceval became Prime Minister and head of the Tory party, and held it till his assassination in 1812. He tried to induce Lord Grenville and his friends to join him, but they declined.

¹ Afterwards Lord Melbourne.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
September 22, 1809.

There is a grand fuss in London and all about, concerning the quarrels in the Cabinet and the changes in the Ministry. Nothing yet is decided; only that some, if not all, of the present good people are to hop it, and some other good people must be found to fill their places. Who they are to be is the question. Some people say it will be the Grenville set; if so, Papa would be one. I feel not much wish that this should happen; Papa's health is not I think up to any anxious situation; but of this there is so little chance that I am in no fidgett yet about it. London is almost totally empty. The few stragglers still there contrive to collect in little knots in St. James's Street, asking "What news?" in the true John Bull way, as if their life depended on the next word. If you see any newspapers, you will read an account of a duel between Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning. It is a pretty way of winding up a ministerial career, to fight it out roundly.¹

September 29.—The Cabinet is not yet settled, and poor England is quite without ministers, while the different parties are fighting it out. Provided no cunning *troisième larron*, as La Fontaine says—Buonaparte, for instance—takes advantage of this agreeable state of interregnum to come and pounce upon us, it is all very well.

Oh, what a shocking winter we shall have! The harvest far from good; coals dreadfully dear, because all the colliers were detained too late at Flushing, and therefore the supply in London is short, and every prognostic of the most intense cold beginning already. "We shall have," my Grandmother Lucan says, with one of her gloomy political looks, "a revolution, a scarcity, and Siberian frost and snow." This I hope you think a pleasing prospect.

¹ Lord Castlereagh thought he had been ill-used—that Mr. Canning had tried to oust him from the War Department. Canning was wounded in the duel.



one of England Bulwarks against
Bonaparte's encroachments 1808.
1808.

Duke of Portland

CARICATURE OF THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

By Lavinia, Countess Spencer

To face p. 80.



WIMBLEDON,

October 8, 1809.

Papa arrived last night after his first month of Norfolk shooting; he has had very good sport, and means to have a good deal more when he goes back to his dear county of Norfolk in a week's time. This event of his arrival has put all my other news out of my head, so next thing I shall tell you will be our conversation at breakfast this morning. The persons of the dialogue were Papa at one end of the table, me opposite, and Nan between us; opposite an empty chair, which was waiting for Mama, who was not yet out of bed, it being only half-past nine. Papa was breaking open an egg, and we were munching when he began: "Nanette, what a fine thought of yours it was to send a gun to Bob; it will be very useful I dare say, provided he don't shoot himself with it."

Nan all in a fluster with the mere sound of the words: "What, how, what do you mean, Lord Spencer? Do you think there's any danger?"

Papa, with his mouth full of egg: "Nonsense! there's Nanette in a fright already, I declare. I did not say there was any danger, did I? Only, you know, a double-barrelled gun does require a little care in loading it, or it may go off from one barrel while you are loading t'other, if you don't mind and keep it half-cocked, except when you are just going to shoot."

"How," says I, then coming into the conversation, "how, Papa, tell me, and I'll write Bob word next letter I send him?"

"Why, tell him, then," says Dad, "never to cock either of the barrels, till just as he is going to fire, while he is loading t'other."

"Oh, as to that," Nan and I both cried out, "he must be silly if he don't find that out himself; but I'll write him word of it directly."

So now mind you take care, for accidents will happen with these tremendous double-barreled guns. All this is supposing Sir Samuel Hood in the *Centaur* has reached you, and given you the gun. How glad I am he is gone to you, to be sure! For he is such a delightful creature, is Sir Samuel.

The next letter describes the famous O.P. riots. The new Covent Garden Theatre was opened, with John Kemble as Macbeth, on September 18, 1809, when the riots known as the O[ld] P[rices] Riots took place. The prices had been raised a shilling on the boxes and sixpence on the pit, the prices for the galleries remaining as before. A committee formed to go into the matter proved that, after all expenses were paid, the proprietors only made a profit of 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ per cent. per annum on their capital. The public was not satisfied, however, and the riots continued till December 10 following, when the pit was reduced to the old price (3s. 6d.), while the boxes remained at 7s.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
October 12, 1809.

We have spent the two last days in a very frisky way, my dear Bob. We have done nothing less than go and sleep one night in London, for the purpose of seeing the new theatre at Covent Garden; hearing the play is a thing nobody has done there yet, for, as you will know if you ever see newspapers, the mob are making open war upon the managers, to force them to give up an addition they have been absurd enough to make to the prices of admission, and this war the Cockney nobility carry on most steadily. As soon as the curtain rises the whole of the audience begin in chorus whistling, roaring, hissing, ringing great bells, blowing French horns, and sounding cat-calls, through the whole performance. Of course not a word is heard of what passes on the stage, and all you have to amuse you is the pantomime and a few battles-royal in the pit, which are carried on between some of the amiable black-faced blackguards who sit in it, much to the delight of all the rest. Both the managers and their opponents are resolved to die before they yield; and so till the Lord Chamberlain puts his finger in the pie, and orders the house to be

shut up till something less disorderly can take place in it, we shall have no play to go to. Through all this confusion, don't you think it was bold of us to venture there ? We have an excellent private box, and are therefore out of the way of real danger, even if the riot grew dangerous. I am glad we went ; the theatre is really the most beautiful thing I ever saw ; so brilliant, so clean and gay, it surpasses all my expectations. If the managers would but give up their stupid obstinacy and let people in at the former price they would be well paid ; it would overflow every night, I dare say.

The only people almost in town we know are the Bessboroughs and Duncannons. Lady Duncannon is at last brought to bed, and of a very fine fat boy;¹ they longed for one to such a degree, and are such excellent nice people, that I am quite delighted at this. We have seen young Mr. Ponsonby ; he is not yet what an inexperienced person can think handsome, but however he *is beautiful*, as you may suppose. He does nothing but cry as yet, poor little soul, at the cold world he has come into. What a pretty wish is that which some Oriental person, I think it was, made upon a birth of an infant : "As you now alone weep, while all who surround you smile, may you at your last hour alone smile, while all around you weep."

My Grandmother S. has not been here after all ; she is not quite well, and not very happy just now. A marriage is said to have taken place which shocks her very much ; it is a dead secret, only told in whispers by everybody to everybody as yet. But, my Bob, you are so far, so very far away from us all, that before it reaches you it will have been publickly declared ; besides, you know it already, I dare say. It is not an interesting *union de deux jeunes coeurs*, I must say, but rather the crowning of a perseverance in vice and artfulness, which is I fancy unheard of ; Clifford of course knows it, as it is no other than the long-expected wedding of his venerable parents.² I can't say I understand why my Grandmother takes it so to

¹ Succeeded as fifth Earl of Bessborough, 1847, and died leaving no children in 1880.

² The Duke of Devonshire and Lady Elizabeth Foster were married on October 19, 1809.

heart; it is a mortifying thing to poor Harriet, to be sure, as it gives Lady Elizabeth a sort of legal right of domineering over her; but besides this I must say it seems to me the most uninteresting of events. No *ostensible* change is said to be intended yet awhile. That is, the lovely bride is not to have "in soft sound '*your grace*' salute her ear." How long her humility will dispense with the honour is difficult to calculate; but I dare say before you can answer this letter the Duchess of Devonshire's parties, and the Duchess of Devonshire's perfections, will be talked of in London. So much for this marriage.

I have now told you of all the news stirring. You will of course know of the new Secretary to ye Admiralty, Mr. Croker's¹ appointment. I wish I expected better things from him than I do. However, he is not much known: perhaps this connection with the navy may strike out of him some unsuspected talents. I am sure I hope so; I should be wretched if that dear, dear set of people were really governed by a complete fool. . . .

October 24.—The three dismal bells of Wimbledon Church have been ringing their doleful ditty in your honour, my Bob. It is lucky for your credit that you were not born on the 25th, for that would be to-morrow, and nobody could tell whether they rang for you or King George; to-morrow being the famous jubilee day, which is to crack all the bells in the empire.

To Earl Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
October 19, 1809.

. . . Mr. Allen has been here, and Mama had a stiff *discuss* with him about the Jubilee. She will have it that it is useless and improper for her to go to church on the 25th, as pray for King George she cannot and will not. However, *Alleno* has persuaded her to go for example's sake; she begs you will send your opinion of the case, as till you tell her she must go, and tell her so with conjugal authority, she will not be what she calls so hypocritical. Poor Mr. Allen is in a

¹ The Right Hon. J. W. Croker, author and politician, caricatured as "Mr. Rigby" in Disraeli's "Coningsby."

stew about his sermon, as he says his brains can with difficulty furnish him with any panegyric which is not directly against his conviction. Mary Carter says the text of Jubilee sermons should be: "Forty years" (or fifty if you like) "long have we been grieved with this generation." . . .

Pray, my dear Papa, eat a little bit of bread, a very small bit, as soon as you wake in the morning. It is so good a thing for the stomach and digestion. I am serious; Mama will tell you enough of it. She recommended it just now to Ocheda, who very near boxed her ears, thinking it was to laugh at him, I believe. . . .

WIMBLEDON,
October 26, 1809.

MY DEAR PAPA,—We are all safe and sound after the Jubilee. Mama, I think, rather expected it would not be the case, and feeling herself in her heart both disloyal and Popish, her conscience made her quite afraid of being punished by some riot coming near us yesterday. However, nothing happened. Mr. Randolph gave a cut at the Catholic party to be sure, but it was a blunt one, and produced no effect but a few yawns of the congregation, and *du reste*, the squibs and crackers we heard were at a safe distance, even in Nanette's opinion. I am very curious, I must say, to know what happened in London about it. Everybody there was trembling for their windows, and not knowing whether to light them up or not. . . . We have heard nothing worth repeating about the appointment of Lord Palmerston.¹ That place is now made use of as a sort of seminary for beginners in politics. I suppose we must be glad of it, as it may divert his Lordship from flirting, in the same way as people rejoiced at his predecessor's appointment because it was to cure him of gambling. Nobody knows, however; some latent genius may be discovered by it at last—there's nothing like trying. . . .

¹ Lord Palmerston (1782-1865), afterwards Prime Minister, was made Secretary at War in Mr. Perceval's Government, instead of Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, afterwards first Earl Granville, who had resigned. He continued in this office, without a seat in the Cabinet, for twenty years.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

ALTHORP,
November 12, 1809.

We have an old relation of ours here—the Dean of St. Asaph, Lady Jones's brother, and his son, Mr. Shipley. Dean Shipley is our cousin—God knows why; a very merry-hearted old soul, as ever I saw, and *above par*, as they say, in conversation, tho' not so agreeable as his sister. I have known clergymen more respectable and *reverend*, but he is, I believe, *au fond*, a good sort of man. His son is a remarkably quiet, pleasant person, and as fond of hunting as is needful to be a vast favorite with Althorp. He laughed heartily with him yesterday over the excellent jokes in the chace-book, and is gone this cold drizzley morning to risk his bones with him in Marston Wood. You see he is just the man for us.

Saturday, November 18.—News for you, my dearest. Very good news, which you will be almost as glad of as I am. It is a match; and not to keep you in suspense, it is my best friend, dear Harriet,¹ who is going to be married. Her *futur* is Lord Granville Leveson-Gower. Her situation at home is so extremely unpleasant now, that I should be very happy at her marrying anyone, and I am of course much the more so, as Lord Granville is very sincerely attached to her, and there is good reason to hope he will make her a good husband. A happy man I am sure he will be with so excellent a wife. Did you ever see him, I wonder? He is reckoned uncommonly handsome, and is extremely gentlemanlike in his manners; besides which he is very well connected; brother to Lord Stafford, Lady Carlisle, and Duchess of Beaufort, with all of whom and their families Harriet has always lived in such intimacy, that it is a great advantage attending the match.

Sunday, 19th.—I wish I had something new for you

¹ Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, youngest son of the first Marquess of Stafford, was created Viscount Granville in 1815. He married in December, 1809, Henrietta Elizabeth, daughter of the fifth Duke of Devonshire.

in the book way, but nothing comes out fit to be sent or read that I know of. Here we are among such multitudes of the dear creatures, that we never think of wanting new ones ; tho' Mama and I often express a wish which makes M. Ocheda's hair stand on end (that is, it would make it, if it were not too well plastered down with pomatum,) with horror ; and that is, that the small books might be in the lower shelves, and those monsters of folios, containing nothing but the "Fathers of the Church," or such things as thirteen volumes of an essay, "Sur la fortification perpendiculaire," and five or six more all scribbled over with Greek and Hebrew, not always pleasant reading even to the learned, might be banished to the upper shelves, where those who want them might get them if they pleased by using a ladder, which poor we of the *fair sect* are debarred from trying, both for fear of breaking and shewing our legs. . . .

CHAPTER IV

1809-1810

IN October, Lord Collingwood received tidings that the French squadron, blockaded in Toulon, was about to break out and proceed to the relief of Barcelona. On the 22nd the wind shifted to the west, and the enemy's squadron put to sea with a large convoy, which, however, became separated from its escort. Rear-Admiral Martin engaged five ships of war, defeated them, and drove them on shore off Frontignan, where two of them were set fire to by the enemy. Meanwhile the convoy was pursued by the *Pomona* frigate, which destroyed five of them and compelled the rest to take refuge in the Bay of Rosas. Here they were attacked by a division of boats, and, notwithstanding a spirited resistance on the part of the vessels (of which five were armed), aided by the fire of the batteries and gunboats, the whole were either burnt or brought off on October 30.

Lieutenant Taylour of the *Tigre* took command, under the direction of Captain Hallowell. Lady Sarah's next letter is written after receiving the news.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

ALTHORP,
November 30, 1809.

MY DEAREST BOB,—How am I to write to you? Whoever could write when they are out of their senses,

which I certainly am, with happiness? All my most extravagant, unreasonable wishes are fulfilled. You have been actually engaged, you have boarded a ship, and in the glorious action and in all the noble exploits that preceded it, the *Tigre* has been first, foremost and most noted; Captain Hallowell has attained the greatest honour, and you have been in the thickest of it all, and not one of you hurt. Oh, that I could describe what I feel, what we all feel about it! Instead of breakfasting this morning we all sat tearing open letter after letter, quite incapable of reading thro' a single page of any; listening to one person who had got hold of the official bulletin one moment, and the next, all beginning to talk at once; totally careless of Mr. Bouverie and some other sporting friends of Althorp's who are here, and who had nothing left for it but to see with patience all their rolls and butter strewn over with letters, and to join in the chorus every now and then of "What a noble action!" "Well done, Hallowell!" "What a glorious profession!" and so on. I wish you could have seen Althorp at the reception of the news to-day. His face glowed, and he was often very near bursting into tears, though he said very little. He is just the man to be proud of you, and he does love you with all his warm heart, which is not saying little. Well, but I still want more little details; I want to know every little particular circumstance. In short, I want to have been there and seen you in Boxer's boat, provided I could have been prophetic and known how it would all end.

*Sunday, December 3 [after receiving Bob Spencer's account of the action].—. . . We passed the happiest evening. Papa was quite in tearing spirits, and we talked of every smallest detail of that magnificent action, so that the hours flew. Yes, that *magnificent* action; and so it was, and, lecture or no lecture, I will say so. What!—not to be allowed to speak of the only thing one is absolutely bursting with? It is all very right that you should be calling every victory a *trivial affair*, and every danger you are in a *little business*; but it is not wrong that I, who am no hero at all, and most unfit for one, God knows, should have a little share of vanity, and speak it out to whoever will listen to me. For, my dearest, if you had not*

been in it we should be talking of nothing else—that Bay of Rosas would always be the greatest of our pleasures to think of; and then, when we know you were in the heat of it, and are come off safe—oh dear, dear, how much too happy I am for this world! My Grandmother L. and Nan have been half devouring Lieutenant Waldegrave in town. Oh that we were but there to hear him talk of you! His account of your popularity and good-humour puts *le comble* to all our delight. Nanette says he is a very fine fellow himself.¹ Now I will close and send this letter. I can't write, or indeed think, of anything but Boxer's boat in the Bay of Rosas yet. . . .

ALTHORP,

December 5, 1809.

The letter I sent you two days since, my dearest Bob, was written literally when I was not in my wits; I am quite sure it could not be common sense. I am now grown quieter, and even think sometimes of other things, but the happiness of this past week I never can forget. . . . To-day's post has brought us the *Gazette*, in which is that blessed list of names. Your name is actually in a *Gazette*—in that part of it, too—not hurt. I am very glad Clifford and Perceval were both in it; it is impossible not to feel the greatest interest about them, and about all your brave friends. How anxious we shall be to hear that the agitation which this success must have occasioned Captain Hallowell, and all the fatigue of the service, have not injured his inestimable health! I cannot conceive a situation of more emotion than that of a man so paternally fond of you all, as he is, remaining in his ship watching the boats and their return, all covered with glory, as he must have done you. . . . I am indeed more vexed than I can tell at not having seen Captain Waldegrave. My Grandmother and Nan are quite delighted with him; they write us nothing but his praises. He has indeed been very kind to them, going to see them and satisfying all they wished about you. He says he never was so questioned about anybody in his life, and never knew a man have so many friends.

¹ William, afterwards eighth Earl Waldegrave and a Vice-Admiral (1788-1859). He had brought the despatches from Lord Collingwood with the news of the engagement.

Poor Althorp has for the fourth time put his shoulder out ; he is very busy contriving a bandage for it which may enable him to hunt safely, for it is now so extremely weakened as to be put out on the slightest touch. It is a great pity that great courage and perseverance and activity, and all manner of fine qualities, should ever be placed in a situation when one must regret them ; and this is certainly in some measure the case as to hunting, for if Althorp was a cowardly milksop he would have left it off when he first hurt himself. But then, Bob, are you now thinking that your own sister wishes he was a cowardly milksop ? If you are, drive the thought out of your noddle ; for courage, perseverance, and activity I must admire, whatever they are wasted upon—which, however, does not prevent my being very, very sorry they should be *wasted* at all. And *perhaps*, exerting the said three virtues in a chace against foxes and not Frenchmen, opposed by brooks and not batteries, *may* be very like wasting them.

ALTHORP,

December 30, 1809.

. . . Althorp generally pays me a visit on his arrival home from each day's hunting, and, as you may suppose, though he does come all bespattered with mud, and in a red jacket that bears many a mark of hard service, he is *rather* a welcome visitor. We talk of the several leaps, tumbles, and feats of each man, horse, and hound, over the fire in the dark, and sometimes called in upon by my uncle, the girls, or anybody who, having sent their letter to the post, don't know what to do with themselves till dressing-time In the evening, if we have any billiard-players in the house, we see their play ; or if any whist-players, we set them down to a green table, and don't disperse till eleven o'clock, all very sleepy in general.

ALTHORP,

January, 9, 1810.

. . . Now I must tell you that we are in nine days to set off for London. In the bottom of my heart I had rather be looking forward to staying here than to going so soon for nine long months away. However, we shall find many pleasant things in London, and if

we were but well over the journey and its bustles I should like it very well. I won't think of the worst part of the story, which is the total loss of all brothers that attend the end of Xmastide. Althorp we shall now only see for a day at a time, when debates call him up ; and the two dear little men are going back again to Eton. *Ainsi va le monde*. One lives in a place till one grows fond of it and of everything and everybody belonging to it, and then the little bell rings tingle-tingle behind the scenes, and, whirr ! you are whisked away, planted somewhere else, and all the faces round you changed, as quick as in a harlequin farce. How I am to wash off and wipe away all my country, hunting ideas, and learn to be a small-talking fine lady again, I don't exactly know. But nothing is impossible to womankind in the changing way, you know, so I won't despair. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
January 22, 1810.

Here we are, shivering and groping about in the worst of all London fogs and cold, since Friday. The Pratts are in high bloom and beauty. Harriet Leveson I have not yet seen ; I long for it beyond all measure. I long, too, to be introduced to Lord Granville, but I must confess that is a different sort of longing—rather *to have it well over*. An introduction to a perfect stranger, with whom you are henceforward to be extremely intimate, whether you or he like it or not, is not precisely the pleasantest of events, and I am somewhat in terror when I think of it.

January 25.—Just as I finished the first bit of my letter t'other day, Jean Martinet¹ came thundering into the room in his gentle way, and told me Lord Granville and Harriet were downstairs ; so down I went, in something of a fluster, and performed the ceremony of introduction. Dear Harriet was looking uncommonly well, and in manner and kindness and cordiality is exactly what she was—better she cannot be, to my taste. As to our new cousin, he is a very tall, large man of thirty-six, and certainly uncommonly handsome, though perhaps, to my aforesaid taste, rather

¹ A Swiss ; for many years Lady Spencer's footman. He taught Lord Althorp his alphabet.

too much of a fair, soft, sweet sort of beauty. His manner is very amiable, and she seems quite as happy as I wish her to be. I have been to her house, which is magnificent, and they are quite an established, settled couple already.

Well, Parliament has met, and Althorp is in town, and politicks are the order of the day. Wherever one goes one can hear of nothing but the first division in the House of Commons, the *awful crisis* of affairs, the *gloomy prospects* of the poor country, and all the other doleful stories which ever since and long before I was in the world have formed the daily talk of the poor inhabitants of London, who never consider that every year of their lives they have foretold that before the next we should be a province of France's, and that, having hitherto always been wrong, they *may* be so again.

SPENCER HOUSE,
February 4, 1810.

. . . Politicks, politicks, and more politicks, that's all one hears in these parts at present. I began with hating the subject, as I used to hate hunting talk ; but *on se fait à tout*, I grew a complete sport's-woman in theory before we left the country, and now all my newly acquired interest about foxhounds and hunters is fast fading away, and supplanted by majorities, minorities, debates, and divisions. Althorp is torn to pieces by his zeal in wriggling out ministers on one hand and his longing to profit by the thaw in Northamptonshire on the other ; so that he is always on the road. Mama is as usual at her levée every day, which has remained unchanged both as to quality and quantity of visitors ; and, except to one play, we have not been out at night. The thought of assemblies brings to my mind the thought of Mrs. Knox, and then of her son, who is gone upon his travels *indade* all about the Mediterranean. A happy man ! I wish it was the fashion for young ladies to go and travel in the Mediterranean. Why shouldn't I ? I am sure most of the young gentlemen who do are much more helpless than any girl, and I am convinced we should manage quite as well, and perhaps *n'en déplaise à vos hautes puissances*, ye lords of the creation, we might derive something more of knowledge and advantage

from the journey than is common to the said young gentlemen.

11th.—I never knew London so totally without any subject of talk, always excepting politicks, as it is now. The Persian Ambassador¹ is dining about, and I have heard so often that he is a prodigiously handsome man, with a long black beard, that I dread the subject. I shall be rather amused, I own however, to dine with him myself, and Lord Camden has promised to ask us to meet him some day. . . .

I expect to be entertained at dinner to-day; we have a *blue-stocking* party. There is a Sir Alexander Johnstone, who is just come from being Chief Justice of Ceylon, and he is to dine here on the strength of that circumstance. Poor man! he will meet a formidable body of brain-pickers; I hope for his sake he is prepared to answer every possible question, and I hope for our sakes he is tolerably good-humoured, and something like other people as to his ways of going on. We should be somewhat dismayed if he turns out as great a curiosity himself as a Cingalese would be.

WIMBLEDON,
March 12.

This evening will be spent by me very differently from that of yesterday; for yesterday Papa, Mama, and I made three of a company of nineteen people who dined at Lord Camden's to meet the Persian Ambassador. It was a very pleasant talking dinner, and his Excellency I am glad to have seen. He is however to my mind not well worth seeing at all, being to my mind hideous instead of beautiful. He looks like a dark-complexioned man in a fit of the jaundice; his eyes and all his face, hands, and his nasty throat, which is quite bare, being all over the same bilious yellow colour. He has very fine teeth and a famous black beard, but no other external perfection that I could see. Many people disbelieve in his reality, and think he is a witty Jew who is amusing himself

¹ He was the first Persian Ambassador to England. Miss Berry wrote in her journal for October 20, 1809: "Great crowds in St. James's Park, seeing the first audience of the Persian Ambassador at the Queen's house" (Buckingham Palace).

by making fools of all the fine folks and keeping up a masquerade character for the sake of the good dinners.

To the Dowager Countess Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
March 19, 1810.

MY DEAREST GRANDMOTHER,—. . . Yesterday evening we enjoyed the most hearty laugh I have (what should I say—seen, felt, or heard ?) this age. It was at a farce they are acting at the Lyceum, called "Hit or Miss." The moral of it is to ridicule those great fools, the barouche club gentry, and to be sure if they bear it and brave it, I shall set their courage high above all other courage in my estimation. Did you ever hear an account of them? A set of *hopeless* young men, who think of no earthly thing but how to make themselves like coachmen, and in order to improve each other, have formed themselves into a club, where they spend their time inventing new slang words, adding new capes to their great-coats, and learning to suck a quid of tobacco and chew a wisp of straw in the most vulgar style; for it is not only on the box, but off it, in all society, that these ornaments of the present age chuse to be mistaken for their coachmen. You may imagine how admirable a perfectly well-acted caricature of this character must have been; and our party—that is, Papa, Mama, Lord Stair, Mr. Grenville, Lord Essex, and myself—were all very near expiring with laughing. Oh, I do love going to the play beyond anything, that's certain; and if the other amusements of this dirty town were but half as good, I should be as fond of it as anybody. I saw Hartington as we were squeezing out of the theatre, through a black narrow passage behind the scenes; but he did not see me, nor could I speak to him. I was surprised he was not yet at Bath; I thought he was to go yesterday.

Talking of plays, which indeed I have now done long enough, dearest Grandmother, to bore you quite to death, puts me in mind of a new acquaintance we have made, with whom I am perfectly delighted. It is Lady Derby, who you know was Miss Farren, an

actress. She seems an uncommonly amiable person. It is very seldom that conversation in London, among ladies after dinner, is brought to any serious subject ; and if it is, still more seldom does one find anybody whose opinions and feelings seem quite right upon it ; but Saturday, when she dined here, she said the most delightful things in a religious way, with more real feeling and less desire to boast or show herself off than ever I heard from anybody before. It quite did one good ; and especially as she is unusually sensible and has a cordial simplicity of manner that relieves one very much after the affectation and frivolity so common among great ladies ; and when I recollect (which indeed was difficult to do) that she had been bred up by a mother who had died of drink and had passed her youth behind the scenes of a playhouse, I really was lost in amazement at the information she had acquired and at the excellence of her conduct. . . .

On the death of his first wife, in 1797, Edward, twelfth Earl of Derby, married Miss Farren, to whom he had been devoted for years. She was then nearly forty, and had been on the stage twenty years. Her character was irreproachable, and she was very much admired. Her portrait by Lawrence in a cloak and muff is well known. Sir Thomas was so much struck with her graceful gesture as she began to unfasten her cloak on entering the studio that he made her keep to that position.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

HOLYWELL,
March 27, 1810.

We live in the true Holywell style—dine at three, and walk after dinner ; that is, those who are so inclined, among whom I am not, for till summer is fairly set in, I don't think that is a pleasant operation I own. I write my letters, read both alone and with Caroline, and teach her country-dances on the piano. My

Grandmother walks miles every day, upon some charitable business or other, and is as kind to us as she can be. Though at the same time I shall not quarrel with the coach that takes me back; *home is home*, you know; I always feel *un pied en l'air* when I am out of it.

The grand question whether ministers should or should not be censured about the Scheld Expedition was to be finally determined last night. It was put off from day to day by long speeches. I long to know how it was settled.¹ There is another bustle in London about Sir Francis Burdett,² who is thought to have deserved being sent to the Tower for having written a libel upon Parliament. If he is sent, they say the populace will make a riot; he is their idol just now. This will be decided next Thursday. I trust there may be no riot; it would be very shocking indeed.

SPENCER HOUSE,
April 9, 1810.

I have been here *au sein de ma famille* since Friday, quite stout and well, all of us—but in *such a bustle!* Oh that I could describe to you the bustle of London! The House of Commons, Thursday, voted that Sir F. Burdett was to be sent to the Tower for his libel; but instead of putting this into immediate execution, they delayed sending off the gentleman so long that the mob had time to assemble and declare they would not allow him to be sent at all. Sir Francis himself announced he would not go by good-will; so there we were at a *non plus*, as they say. But not a quiet one, for the whole length of Piccadilly, where the hero's house is, has been ever since one continued mass of the blackest of blackguards, men, women, and boys! who professed to defend his door and prevent his

¹ They were not censured. A vote was passed approving of it, on the grounds that whatever the result of the expedition it was a laudable effort.

² He attacked the House of Commons, in a speech that was published by Cobbett, for putting a Radical named Gale Jones in prison for publishing animadversions on the Government, which Burdett asserted the House had no right to do. Burdett was arraigned in his turn, and was the last man ever imprisoned in the Tower.

being taken by force. Besides which, they insisted on every *passant* on foot or horseback waving their hat and huzzaing for Sir Francis, under pain of being totally covered with mud. The look of the mob, black, sulky, and determined ; their continual loud shouts ; the horrid sight of the heavy Horse Guards riding in among them and over them, vainly trying to disperse them ; the eager, anxious, frightened faces of every creature one saw in the streets at the increase of the tumult and noise—all this has made London quite a curious scene. It has been worse than curious, however, for in the conflicts between the troops and the mob many lives have already been lost. They have got a prodigious force into the town of cavalry and infantry—some people said 25,000 men yesterday—and cannon are planted in many places ; for the riot is not only in Piccadilly, but all over London. Wherever there is a minister's house or that of any other unpopular man, a flying party of the mob attack it, shatter the windows, abuse the inhabitants, and often break open the door, unless stopped by the guard.

This instant—I mean a couple of hours ago—the point was carried. I heard, as I was sitting here, so tremendous an increase of uproar that I flew to my window, and saw the whole park full of people running away from Piccadilly, which was then crammed with guards. The constables were at that moment forcing away Sir Francis, who is by this time, I hope, safely lodged in the Tower. But the city mob, they say, is worse than ours, and accordingly Lord Moira, Constable of the Tower, had planted the great guns at the gate, to prevent any violent attempt of the people to rescue their favourite as he was taken into his fine prison just now. My Bob, conceive how it made me start to hear the fine, deep distant sound of those great guns. Good heaven ! If they have fired at the mob, which they say was 10,000 strong yesterday, besides all those who are now gone with Sir Francis, what horrible execution they must have made ! But I hope they may only have thundered at them without ball. We are far from comfortable now, tho' the thing is done, for the people have threatened all sorts of horrors in revenge for their defeat. Well, Heaven keep the black gentry out of this quiet little nook !

I do not think we have one house that is not staunch opposition, except Lord Arden's, and he is so quiet a man, I hope they scarcely know him and won't attack him.

April 11.—I will now put an end to this immense letter, which has been sometimes melancholy, sometimes grave, sometimes frightened, and will now end in peaceful tranquillity. All our mobbing is over quite. Sir Francis is comfortable in the Tower, and neither soldiers nor blackguards are to be seen about the streets. In two more days, I dare say, it will be clean forgotten altogether. The Tower guns did not fire, as I fancied, nor have many people been killed, I trust. Lies and exaggerations showered so about us, that one knew not what to believe.

This letter is ended just as I am going up to dress myself for a great dinner at Lord Anson's. The fog and rain are most dismal. I hope the company will be lively.

Henry Cavendish (1731-1810), the eminent natural philosopher mentioned in the following letter, was nephew of the third Duke of Devonshire. It was said of him that he uttered fewer words than any man who lived to fourscore years, not excepting the monks of La Trappe.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
April, 1810.

There is very little news stirring, and none that I know. Mama's chimney *commence à fourmiller* with cards of invitation. The gay world is just shaking itself, and waking up for spring campaigning, which will go on just in the old, old, humdrum way. By the way there is a bit of news, part of which you will like to hear. An old philosopher, a Mr. Cavendish, known all over Europe for his profound science and valuable discoveries, and known in London chiefly for the odd cut of his coat, and the very retired and singular life he led, is just dead. He has left his property divided into six shares, each consisting of the trifling sum of £120,000. Five of these little shares he has left divided

among Lord George Cavendish and his three sons, and the sixth he has left to Lord Bessborough, to whom £6,000 a year is a prodigious increase of income, and I never was more glad of anything, and chiefly for the sake of the Duncannons, whose rising family bids fair to require a little money by and by. It was expected this enormous fortune would have gone to the Duke of Devonshire, as the old man was very proud of his family name; but whether he forgot his grace's existence, or perhaps thought that said existence was somewhat of a *disgrace* to the noble name of Cavendish, he has not mentioned him once in this important will, which I can't much regret, the Duke and Hartington both being *pretty well* off. I only wish he had divided one of Lord George's shares between Georgiana Morpeth and Harriet Leveson. That would have been delightful.

To the Dowager Countess Spencer.

ST. JAMES'S PLACE,
April 16, 1810.

Gin and Elizabeth Bingham were examined the other day by the Dean of Canterbury (Andrewes), preparatory to their confirmation, which is to take place on Thursday next at the Chapel Royal; Papa, Mama, and Gin are to come here from Wimbledon for it, and return the same day. The Dean was very much pleased with the two dear girls, and found them uncommonly well instructed and prepared. It is a period of their lives of which it is impossible not to feel the importance; entering the world is so different an epoch, if one thinks seriously about it, from what a child imagines it to be, that I think too much impression cannot be made on their minds by all their religious preparation for it, as, on the other hand, as little as possible should be left by the prospect of wearing hoops, finding partners, and dining at seven o'clock. . . How little they know of the world they are soon to go into, good heavens! Would not anyone imagine, dearest Grandmother, from this letter, that I had gone through more trials and miseries in the world than ever heroine of a novel did? By the way, have you not yet read "The Refusal"? If you have not, fie, fie!

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,
Good Friday, 1810.

They [some letters] were brought by the same ship which brought home the body of poor Lord Collingwood.¹ I don't wonder at all you feel about him. It must make anyone melancholy to think of his dying, just as he was setting out to come to his country, after so long an absence. He has never seen his friends here since the Battle of Trafalgar, has he? Never received their congratulations upon it. However, after doing his best to perform his duties through a long life, we must hope he is now safe in port, in a home rather better than even poor old England. . . .

Tuesday, April 24.—Papa went to town Monday last, to dine at the Prince of Wales's, and came back to us yesterday. He was well questioned by us all, for we wanted to know how the dinner went off. It was given to all the Knights of the Garter, and was unparalleled in splendour. Two hundred lighted candles in the room, a bran new service of plate, the finest cut-glass lustres, bottles and glasses that ever sparkled, the twenty-five blue-ribboned gentry all in full dress and glee, and the Prince doing the honours with due bustle. Altogether it was a glorious piece of—what shall I say?—grandeur or nonsense? For somehow it makes one laugh, as if it was a parcel of children playing at great people; so proud of their bits of blue ribbon, and their pretty shining playthings all about them. The Royal host worried and toasted himself till he rather clipped the King's English before it was over. But that's nothing. I love him for having the finest possible pictures of Lord Rodney, Lord Keppel, Lord St. Vincent, and, finest of all, that glorious Nelson, hung up as chief ornaments of his great room. He is really fond of the sea, I hope by that. Papa says he never saw so delightful a picture as that of Lord Nelson.

¹ Admiral Lord Collingwood died at sea in the Mediterranean. It was said of him that "he only wanted opportunity to make him a second Nelson." He and Nelson were great friends of Lady Spencer's.

We are all looking forward more and more to the operation before us, of going to the ceremony of Lord Grenville's inauguration as Chancellor of Oxford, properly called the insignia,¹ heaven knows why. It is not to happen till July, and we may, to be sure, all be dead, and gone, and forgotten long before; but the bustle in prospect is so great, so terrible, that I fancy it is just coming upon us. Only think of a quiet body like your sister to set out first of all to go and spend a week at Cassiobury, at Lord Essex's, there to gather up a party with whom you proceed to Oxford, where you enter upon four days of *happiness*; during which days you have to be up, breakfasted, and dressed in spangled gowns, and loads of diamonds and feathers, by nine in the morning; to devote the whole day to hearing Latin speeches, and seeing poor dear Lord Grenville look more frightful than any Christian ever did before; swimming about in a long robe, and a big wig, in a crowded theatre, where we shall all suffocate during the enjoyment of such a sight, and such a hearing, I fully expect. After said four days, we are to finish ourselves by seeing all the lions of Oxfordshire. Oh, my Bob! What a bustle! In common candour, I must add a bit to my description of Oxford: that tho' I dread it, I should hate to be left behind. So much for inconsistency. Female inconsistency, is it?

It is curious to see by the next letter how much promotion in the navy was influenced by party politics.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 7, 1810.

. . . Saturday Mama had a visit from Hamilton,² who came to announce that he is promoted, and, moreover, to express some surprise that altho' he is actually a captain, he does not feel so different from what he was, nor so entirely in heaven as he had expected to be. He accounted for it in some degree by a good-natured regret for what poor Clifford must feel on the occasion, as Lord Mulgrave³ went out of office without

¹ Encænia. ² He had been a lieutenant on board H.M.S. *Tigre*.

³ Lord Mulgrave had resigned his office of First Lord of the Admiralty.

knocking off his whole list of *aspirants*, which I thought was always done. Poor Clifford, he will, I am afraid, be much disappointed to hear of this change at the helm not doing him any good. Apropos of the said change, it is that Lord Chatham goes out quite,¹ Lord Mulgrave takes *his* place at the Ordnance, and Charles Yorke comes into the Admiralty; and this being considered as only a little shoving about, but no improvement in the ministry, was described by somebody t'other day, by saying the King had turned his dirty shirt, and thinks he had put on a clean one: which is a very good account of it, don't you think?

At five o'clock, Saturday, a note arrived from Hartington, announcing his intention of dining and going to the play with us, which was performed accordingly. We dined *en trio*, and enjoyed ourselves vastly at the play, seeing "Henry VIII," by Shakespeare, acted famously—Queen Catherine by Mrs. Siddons. Poor Hartington took the printed book with him, or he could not have known what was saying at all, his deafness is such; but with the book he did admire and enjoy the spectacle prodigiously. He sets out the 14th to take a long tour in Ireland, over his father's estates; an excellent plan this, instead of that odious *Londoning* away the whole spring and summer. Another cousin of ours cannot prevail on himself to break the hearts of all the old ladies, with whom he fritters away his time, tho' Hartington has pressed him to be of his party; so here he stays, a monument of empty languor. You perchance may guess I mean Willy the Fair,² whom I own I had fancied so improved by his travels, that I was going to retract all my former opinions of him, but this refusing to leave the box lobbies, and ball ante-rooms, for three months of his life quite puts me out of all patience. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 10, 1810.

We are going this morning to see Carlton House, which is so magnificent just now, that it is well worth

¹ Lord Chatham went out of office in consequence of the inquiry into the disastrous Walcheren expedition, in which he had command of the fleet. He shared none of his father's or his brother's genius.

² William Ponsonby, afterwards first Lord de Mauley.

the trouble they say ; and Lord Moira has been kind enough to get us the Prince's leave. He changes the furniture so very often, that one can scarcely find time to catch a glimpse at each transient arrangement before it is all turned off for some other ; the present state of things is unusually fine, they say.

Before I leave off I must repair a mischief I did unintentionally in writing to you last. Poor William Ponsonby *is* going with Hartington to Ireland. There's a glorious effort for you ! If he comes back as much improved as he was by Spain, he will end a hero after all, and a fig for the old ladies ! they may weep for him in vain.

11th.—Carlton House is very beautiful, very magnificent, and we were well amused looking at it yesterday. I don't know whether you are *worthy* of the beauties of old china vases, gold fringes, damask draperies, cut-glass lustres, and all the other fine things we saw there. I can only tell you the lustre in one of the rooms, of glass and ormolu, looking like a shower of diamonds, cost between *two and three thousand pounds*. I write the number at full length, that you mayn't fancy I have put a cypher too many. However, it is such a peculiarly English manufactory that our heir-apparent is right in encouraging it.

There is the hour for dressing, so off I go. I doat upon the life we are now leading ; seeing plenty of people, and very pleasant ones ; and not routing. But to any other correspondent than yourself I should feel sorry to have so little to amuse you with of London news. To you, however, I thoroughly believe, that hearing of the *circle* and its doings is always acceptable, tho' not perhaps amusing ; therefore “free as air, or sun, or gale, flow on—flow unconfined my tale.”

WIMBLEDON,
May 15, 1810.

We came here upon a sudden thought yesterday ; a very snug party, Mama, Nan, and I, without any children or *beaux*. We shall reunite in town next Friday, much to my joy, for this is not the weather for a rural retirement. It is cold and raw and damp, so that we can't stir out, and if it were not for “The Lady of the Lake,” I don't know what we should be

reduced to. This same lady is a new and, to me, quite delightful poem of Walter Scott's; nobody but me has read it yet, so you must not be surprised if at some future time I write you word it is not worth reading, by the decision of better judges. But I do so love every word that man ever wrote, that I have been enjoying the book over and over again, till I am ashamed of returning to it. Mama has got it now; I wonder what she thinks of it?

Papa and Althorp are in town, up to their ears in business of all sorts; for besides the usual humdrum bustles of the House of Commons for my brother, and all Papa's little haunts to booksellers, printsellers, museums, and all manner of little pursuits he always has in London, to occupy their time, they have made out a new employment now; which is, to write the catalogue of the classics in the library, with notes about the different editions and copies, full of a sort of learning which neither you or *I* understand—book-collector's learning. Althorp and Papa spend an hour daily at the work, and seem to like it of all things; poor Althorp is delighted to find something to do now the hunting season is over, and Papa enjoys teaching him to be a book-worm extremely.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 19, 1810.

I have just got a new drawing master, and I work hard for him, as I have so short a time to learn before we leave town. Apropos of leaving town, alas! I fear my sad forebodings will prove true and we shall not go to Ryde, for no house is to be had there for love or money, they say. The great Venables has gone down to try what his eloquence and powers of contrivance can do. But I am not sanguine, and am beginning to prepare for spending our summer at some dull, flat, fashionable watering-place. I don't flatter myself however that I have yet succeeded in making up my mind, for hope has not quite left me, and you know till one has driven away that, no philosophy arrives. Certainty is the only comfort, and that is not a common one *dans ce bas monde* indeed. I shall have plenty to do wherever we are in the summer, for I shall be governess to the whole *infantry*, Gin being now so

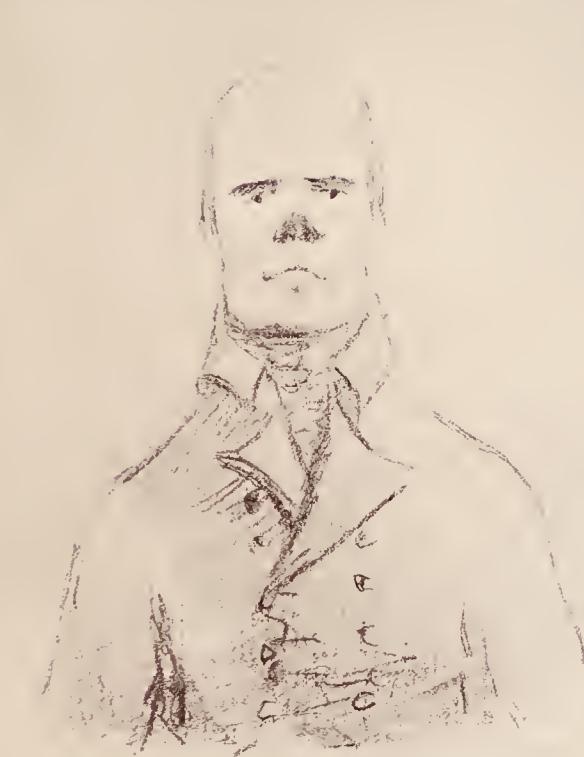
near sixteen, that the time draws near when the last remains of the nursery establishment is to be abolished, and poor old Mlle. Müller is to leave us. It will be a great change, and I don't think any of us will like it at first, but as it must happen some time or other, this is perhaps the best possible. Gin will then dine and breakfast with *the circle*, and be upon a footing with me in the household. Mlle. Müller is going to Mr. Poyntz for his three little girls. . . . Gin has not yet been told of it, and is not, till we set out from town.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 31, 1810.

. . . We are in the first burst of curiosity and observation just now, examining our Irish *cousinade*—Mr. Lindsay, Lady Eleanor,¹ and Margaret and Louisa, their two daughters; they arrived among us last Friday, so we have had leisure to become very well acquainted. Mr. Lindsay himself is in a wretched state of health, a creeping palsy killing him with a slow certainty that is quite melancholy to watch; he scarcely ever speaks, and can hardly walk across the room, and I fear the London physicians are doing him as little good as the Irish ones did. My Aunt Eleanor, tho' she is younger than Nan, looks much older; but she is a good-looking woman rather, with pretty dark blue eyes, and as good-humoured as possible; not very clever I think. In one respect they are all alike, in speaking by very far the most desperate brogue I ever heard. How long they remain in London depends on Mr. Lindsay's health and Dr. Baillie's advice. To be sure, being conveyed suddenly from a remote park in Connaught to a lodgings over a jeweller's shop in St. James's Street, in the *beau milieu* of a full London season, might turn anybody's head, but they are too sick or too quiet, or too sensible all of them to feel it the least, and nothing can exceed the tranquillity with which they look at the whirl of the great world. We have taken Margaret to the opera and Louisa to the play; they were delighted both of them, but don't seem anxious to go out any more.

Lord Grenville has been very alarmingly ill, but is

¹ Lady Eleanor Lindsay was Lady Spencer's younger sister. She married Thomas Lindsay, of Hollymount House, co. Mayo.



L Grenville
the chef de partie
Listening to a new Bishop

LORD GRENVILLE LISTENING TO A NEW BISHOP.

Caricature by Lavinia, Countess Spencer.

To face p. 106.

now better. Poor Mr. Windham¹ is, I fear, dying. He will be a sad loss to society; I never knew a man so felt for as he is. But the strange thing is what happened last night, which I shall soon go down to Mama's levée to hear talked over; and that is the Duke of Cumberland² being stabbed in his sleep by his *valet de chambre*. The man concealed himself in the bedchamber till three in the morning, and then woke his master by giving him a cut with a broad sword across the head; he wounded him besides eight or nine times, and as soon as the Duke could get away, and hobble all bleeding downstairs for help, the wretched *valet de chambre* cut his own throat, and died instantly. Some people say he was bribed to do this, and his being a Frenchman brings it home to the Emperor Napoleon; but this is extremely absurd, I think, because the Duke of Cumberland being only fourth or fifth son of the King, what could it signify that he should live or die to any but his family? Others think the servant was mad, which seems likely enough. However, H.R.H. is not at all dead, nor in the least danger, the wounds having all been insignificant.

June 7.— . . . The Duke of Cumberland begins to grow *stale* as a topick of conversation, especially since his rooms are shut up, for can you imagine, my Bob, that the finest, most delicate ladies in town went in parties to look at those nasty rooms as a morning lounge, and to examine the slops of blood which covered the bed, the floor, and even the walls and pictures, of the scene of this horrible murder and suicide? It was a spectacle which I should think the stoutest heart would hardly bear to look at, and yet these soft beings were able to stand it, out of mere curiosity. His Royal Highness is almost entirely recovered, so, thank Heaven, we shall have no court mourning to keep us in black gowns all the summer. The assassin was an Italian, not a Frenchman, and I think the foolish notion of his having been bribed is blown over. . . .

¹ He died on June 4, 1810.

² Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, afterwards King of Hanover. His assailant, an Italian named Sellis, was found to be mad.

RYDE,
July 8, 1810.

Papa is very well, he writes us word. Ye Oxford ceremonies are over,¹ and have been so crowded, and bustling, and hot, and rainy, that I can't say how happy we are at having escaped them. Several ladies lost their shoes, others fainted away, and all sorts of disasters happened, from absolute suffocation. I had rather be breathing the fresh sea-breezes here, I own....

RYDE,
July 21, 1810.

Althorp leaves here in a few days for his summer hunting. He has been working indefatigably of late, learning to draw dogs and horses, and it is really quite surprising how he has improved. He began only able to make a wretched monster standing on four sticks, and a head like a battering-ram, and now by copying good prints, and by endless perseverance, he draws horses and dogs remarkably well from an original, and means to send us portraits of his whole pack from Brigstock. I think of sending you a little book we have been reading with great pleasure lately, and which I think you will like too. It is "Les Memoires du Prince Eugène." They are written by himself, and just published. It is not what you might call a well-written book—that is, not critically, but the style is so manly, and the character of the author appears so visibly throughout one of the greatest heroes, that it quite delights one. There is a good deal of praise in it too of our great-grandpapa, the Duke of Marlborough, and that is not disagreeable to read from such an authority as Prince Eugène. So you shall have it, and likewise if it is yet printed in octavo, I will send you "The Lady of the Lake," Walter Scott's new poem. I like it exceedingly, so do we all.

Our two boys are, as usual, busily employed boat-building. An event has occurred in their lives this summer. They have been told what their professions are to be; and, thank God for it, they seem really and cordially delighted, both of them. Fritz already fancies himself an *epauletted*, red-coated, well-mounted cavalry officer; and goes farther, for he is a very fine-

¹ The installation of Lord Grenville as Chancellor.

spirited fellow, and does all he can to prove his courage in facing danger, and his toughness and fortitude in bearing pain and hardships. He doats on nothing but hearing and reading of battles, heroes, and victories. As to George, he could scarcely keep grave the whole day, after he had heard he was to be a clergyman. He came repeatedly to tell me *en confidence*—“Il n'y a rien que j'aimerais autant que d'avoir un joli petit living, une maison à moi, où je puis vivre bien tranquille, et avoir soin de mon village. J'espère que Fritz aimera autant être soldat, mais j'en doute.” May Heaven grant they may both distinguish themselves in their way! Their characters now are really marked and fixed and distinct to a ridiculous degree for such children. George much the best head of the two, much the most *appliqué*; but Fritz quick enough for all that, only somewhat idle withal.

RYDE,
August 6, 1810.

. . . No event has occurred here *barring* Hamilton's visit. He promised to come and take our letters as soon as the wind changed. I hope and trust Taylour won't be long after him, but interest and politics are, I fear, growing very terribly powerful in the navy affairs, which is a sad thing indeed. Well, my dearest, this writing to you by so sure an opportunity, and by a man we shall see just before he goes straight to you, seems somehow or other to bring you nearer to me. What a distance it is! But I am not going to grumble about it, for that is of small use; and besides, there is something very *rapprochant* in such an affection as I feel for you. Such an affection as is quite different from what I have to any other person, really and truly. And yet, Bob, you and I are hardly acquainted. Those few weeks you spent with us two years since seemed but a few little quick days; and I know less of you than of most people, personally, since you were thirteen. And then do think of my imprudence of my writing so, *à cœur ouvert*, to a hobbledehoy of nineteen, who may be as good-for-nothing after all as any blue-coat can be. How is it tho', seriously, that I can guess what you would think of anything that happens? Why, it is owing to those letters of yours, for they are a picture of your heart and mind, and being so, they

must be a delight to us. You see I write to you more nonsense than usual this time. It is because I have less fears of any chance bringing the letter back. Sometimes I fancy the ship my epistle is carried by may be taken, and so the epistle published by Bony; and I assure you the idea that it is *possible* my friends here in England should read the extreme nonsense I favour *you* with, makes my blood run cold. Heaven knows the *Onyx*, impregnable as Hamilton thinks her, *may* be taken, too. But then he would throw this overboard, I trust. Now I must go to our family evening party. Papa reads to us while we work, and the boys build boats.

Tuesday, 27th.— . . . The wind is at least S.E. to-day, if not quite easterly, so I will get on a little with this in case Hamilton should come. . . . I think I will ask him to take out the little book I told you about, “Prince Eugène’s Memoirs”; I am sure you will like it. At the end you will find an account of his father and mother’s family, which is very necessary, and likewise a prayer of his composing, which two things old Dutens ferretted out for Mama. The prayer is not a good one, I think, but at least it shows he had a great sense of his religious duties. I should tell you that Hamilton brought us a friend of his with whose *extérieure* (all we can judge of yet) we were much pleased; Lord Balgonie¹ I mean. His having been at Rosas was more than a sufficient reason for our wishing to know him. He is just going to his father’s in Scotland, so we are not likely to see him again.

August 9.—Oh, I must tell you that, as the “Lady of the Lake” is not yet published in octavo, Mama sends you “The Scottish Chiefs,” a new novel, certainly much better than “Ida,” and I think more interesting than “Cœlebs”²—tho’ this last made a great noise, and certainly has considerable merit in many ways.

RYDE,
September 14, 1810.

The weather is brilliant and beautiful, and we are here very merry just now owing chiefly to a visit my Uncle

¹ Afterwards eighth Earl of Leven (1785-1860).

² “The Scottish Chiefs” was by Jane Porter; “Cœlebs in Search of a Wife,” by Hannah More.

(Lucan) is paying us ; he, you know, always contrives to keep a house alive, and as we are all in very good health and spirits, we make a very pleasant party ; but, as I said before, it would be made still pleasanter than it is, if we had a dear packet from you to think over. Though, do you know, I found a sentence t'other day, in a most delightful book I am reading, "Mme. de Sévigné's Letters," which sentence exactly describes my unreasonableness, and shows how hard it is to satisfy such cravings. She is thanking her daughter for some letter, and she says, "Mon Dieu, que je suis impatiente de recevoir une de vos lettres, il y a bien une grande demie heure depuis que j'en ai reçu." And so I always feel, my Bob, the more I get, the more I wish for. This same book I remember reading some years back, and being amused rather at the wit, and no wonder, for it is full of the most brilliant, lively and playful wit that ever was ; but I likewise remember thinking the continual expressions of Madame de Sévigné's affection for her daughter, and regret at their separation, first exaggerated, and then tiresome. I am altered now, for I have felt every single thing she expresses, so much so, and so true is this, that I can do nothing as I read along but apply it all to what I have experienced about you.

To the Dowager Countess Spencer.

RYDE,
October 1, 1810.

. . . Mama is in a great fuss establishing a school here, upon Dr. Bell's plan.¹ The poor children are as yet very badly off for instruction, and the Methodists are in consequence spreading very fast. Mama means to purchase a bit of land and build a large room, and a cottage for the schoolmaster. She is very zealously assisted by our clergyman, who is a most excellent man. The plan for the building is, as you may imagine, already drawn, and she has been very successful hitherto in every thing but one, not the least

¹ Dr. Andrew Bell was the founder of the so-called Madras system of education, under which the scholars were trained to instruct each other. Dr. Bell died as a Canon of Westminster in 1819.

essential point—getting the land. . . . Money being very necessary to set out with, Mama boldly applied to Mr. Hawkins Browne, who, you know, has a large sum to spend in charities by his predecessor's will, and he has engaged to give £200! Is not that too lucky? Our Bishop [of Winchester] we have great hopes of; and in short, if we can but get the cross old landlady of this estate to let us have a quarter of an acre of her land, we shall go on swimmingly. It would be quite delightful to see a good school rise up here, and to have it to overlook from Westfield. . . .

RYDE,
October 3, 1810.

. . . What I would give to see dear Lady Hood when we are in town! She is a dear woman. But I fear we shan't see her, for she went last spring to Sidmouth to stay till next Easter. I respect her for doing so; her husband being absent, beautiful and admired as she is, it is a wise and meritorious thing to leave London and go and live with her old mother in retreat.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

RYDE,
October 6, 1810.

I must to-day give you, my dearest Bob, an account of an expedition of ours yesterday, *que vous regarde*. It was a beautiful day, and we determined to pass the morning at sea; and as we all agreed that your spoons and forks should be sent directly to you, and that Portsmouth would be as likely a place to purchase them at as any, I therefore proposed that we should steer that way, and see about choosing some. Accordingly we took a boat and sailed across, Papa, Gin, Liz, and I. We landed at the bathing house, had the gratification of walking up Point Street, amidst all the stinks, and noise, and horrors, and arrived safe in High Street. By some inspiration we chose Mr. Read's shop and entered it. A very fine gentleman, full of airs and graces, produced an elegant assortment of forks and spoons (which he called tables, as a *nom de tendresse* for table-spoons), and Papa and I fixed upon a pattern which

looked pretty and strong, while the two girls were feeding their eyes with gazing at the brooches and rings under the glass. Papa then proceeded to order the crest and cypher. He wrote the cypher down; so far we got on swimmingly. But when, after some humming and hawing, Papa came out with a confession that he had no crest about him without a coronet and garter (a low bow from our coxcomb behind the counter), and must therefore shew it him in the Court Kalendar, it appeared by examination that this gentleman had been shewn that very crest for the same purpose two months ago. Then Papa and I stared at each other without making head or tail of it for a great while, and then came into my head an obscure sort of notion that Hamilton had said he should order you the things you would want in the wardroom. The white cloth for your uniform I am *sure* he talked of carrying out to you, and I think I recollect the spoons, too. In short we stayed our hand for the present.

Papa is going to dine at the Captains' Mess at Portsmouth on Monday. I am quite proud and pleased at their having asked him, the dear man; for I fancy it is not a common honour to a brown coat, and, indeed, he deserves it, for his brown coat has more blue in it than any other, I am sure. He is a sailor all over, through and through, and enjoys the thoughts of dining at the mess and sleeping at Sir Roger Curtis's,¹ and being barged back to us next morning, quite as a boy would.

Wednesday, October 10.—Papa came back to us yesterday, quite delighted with the magnificent mess dinner of the day before. Lord Amelius Beauclerk did the honours to forty people. Papa, Mr. Croker (who is living here), and Lord Holland were the *lubbers* of ye party, and it went off famously in every way.

WIMBLEDON,
October 25, 1810.

. . . I must tell you how we all thought of you, and drank your precious health, and wished you every possible happiness and blessing from the bottom of our hearts yesterday, even more, at least more openly, than on other days, it being the 24th October, and your

¹ Admiral Sir R. Curtis, G.C.B.; distinguished himself at the Battle of the First of June.

great nineteenth birthday. What a fine fuss you are in just now, my Bob! *Passing*,¹ I hope; and I trust your papers reached you in time by the *Fortunée*, for you to be promoted before many days are over our heads. Well, Heaven bless and protect you, my dearest Lieutenant, Middy, Captain, Admiral, whatever I may live to see you—still my own darling Brother, be the title what it may! By the way, like a fool, I forgot to say the View of the Toulon Fleet is with your letter to Mama. What a nasty numerous fleet it is!

SPENCER HOUSE,
November 8, 1810.

We have been here since Friday last, expecting to set out for Althorp to-day; but plans don't *always* turn out exactly as they were laid, and so here we are still. In order to disturb our scheme, *il n'a pas fallu beaucoup*, for the King's illness,² the expectation of news from Portugal, the meeting of Parliament next week, Papa's obligation to come to said meeting from Norfolk Tuesday—all these reasons make us not at all averse from remaining in London in the way of news, foreign and domestic. Papa will come from Norfolk *bien malgré lui* to this unexpected meeting of Parliament, for he is shooting away gloriously at Holkham. He shot fifty head of game in one day, and is more wild about it than ever. Althorp, *de son côté*, will not come up from his hunting in very good humour; come he *must*, however. London will be as full next week as ever it is in March, much to the surprise of the November fogs, who never knew themselves so *achalandés* before. The good people will all disperse again, I dare say, as soon as possible, and, if it pleases Heaven that the King recovers, we shall go on again in the old humdrum style. It will be a dismal sight next week, for the death of Princess Amelia has put everybody into the deepest mourning. When I say everybody, I mean it literally. All tradespeople, workpeople, servants out of livery, every creature who can scrape up money to buy a black rag, will mourn.

¹ Robert Spencer was about to be made lieutenant, hence the purchase of knives and forks and white cloth for his uniform.

² He finally became insane after the death of Princess Amelia, his favourite daughter.



George John, 2nd Earl Spencer,
from a portrait at Hagley, after T. Phillips, R.A.

All the shops are full of black. In short, it is quite an odd look it gives London.

. . . We have been thinking and seeing a good deal of the Lindsays since we have been in town. They have spent their summer at Ramsgate, and returned to London the same day as we came back. But how different were our journeys! I believe I told you last spring of their being come to England for the health of Mr. Lindsay; of their being very amiable, clever girls, and the poor mother a good-natured woman; and of our having taken quite a friendship for 'em. Well, they went, still for his health, first to Cheltenham, then to Ramsgate; and about a fortnight ago, after two long years of suffering, all occasioned by the loss of his little boy, who was drowned in the *Blenheim*, this poor father died at Ramsgate, quite in the strength of his age, leaving seven children, and a mother not yet forty to take care of them. It is a most melancholy history, and it is impossible not to feel deeply interested for them. My Aunt Eleanor is a most affecting image of resignation—so miserable and yet so gentle, and so thankful for the comforts she is still blessed with, that it is impossible to look at her unmoved. She has led a most exemplary life. Married at *fifteen* to a man she scarcely knew, and into a family she knew not at all, and settled quite in the most retired part of Connaught, she has continued twenty-five years in the same situation, quite separated from all her early friends, and always entirely under the dominion of an old father and mother-in-law, who quite managed everything, and took a fixed habit directly of treating her like a child. She never has appeared for a moment discontented, repining, or in any respect different from what she should have been. Is not this a good life to look back upon, for a woman who was absolutely a child when she began to manage herself? Now you know all about the poor Lindsays, and you can fancy pretty well how we go on here.

Mama's levée is pretty full. We are all in very deep mourning. Harriet Leveson¹ is just brought to bed of a fine girl; Grandmama Spencer is in town to nurse her, and so is G. Morpeth.² Ah, my dearest, how fine

¹ Lady Granville Leveson-Gower.

² Georgiana, wife of Lord Morpeth, afterwards Lord Carlisle.

and fair it all looks as long as one does one's duty and looks round no farther than one's nose! But when I try to look forward a little beyond the length of mine, which is no great way neither, you know, I can make myself very melancholy with uncertainties of all sorts. Why do we hear no more of you, of your schemes, of Sir Samuel Hood and his return, and all those pretty things we thought or dreamt so much about in the bright summer months of Ryde? . . .

ALTHORP,
November 27, 1810.

We are living in much the usual way here, except that the King's illness and the nasty meeting of Parliament keep us rather upon thorns. Papa has been obliged to leave us this very morning to go and attend a Privy Council in town, and Althorp will go for the House of Commons to-morrow; so we shall be left, we females, alone—Mama, Gin, and me, and Lady Duncannon, for her husband must go to town with Althorp. Their two children, one three and t'other one year old, are here too, and they are, as well as the father and mother, the nicest people in the world—quite like a bit of ye circle; they are staying here for some time, I hope. Poor Althorp, for the sixth time, put his shoulder out on Friday last, and it is sad to see how weak and stiff his arm is—the right arm, too. But he don't leave off hunting, as you may imagine, on that or any other account; his zeal encreases yearly, I do think. This old place looks rather in a *délabrée* situation just now; a tremendous gale a fortnight or three weeks ago played the deuce in the woods; near two hundred of the poor old gentlemen, oaks, beaches (*sic*), and elms are destroyed, and in some parts of the park they are very much missed.

December 1, 1810. — Althorp and Duncannon came back to us yesterday. Papa spoke in the Upper House, and spoke very well; he is to arrive among us to-day. It is very pleasant to have somebody go up for a day or two to town, leaving us to take care of ourselves in a comfortable warm house in fine bright weather, and then to have them come back full of news from London, telling us who they saw there, and what they did, and, in short, a budget full, which one talks well over round a fire in the evening. Althorp is gone

out hunting this morning, though it is a hard frost, and if he should tumble, I am in terror for fear of his arm. I will send you this letter directly; I don't expect any news. As to the King's illness and all that sort of stuff, the newspapers I hope you have to tell you about it, and I can't for the life of me feel half as much interested as I ought. . . .

ALTHORP,
December 18, 1810.

For three or four days, my dearest *Lieutenant Spencer*, I have been watching for a moment to write to you. So, my Bob, your promotion is actually got through. Mr. Yorke was so good as to send us down the commission, signed by four Lords (an unusual favour, Papa says), to look at, and, to be sure, the sight of it did one's heart good. . . . And, to be sure, I am not a little pleased at thinking of you in a cabin above water, with a *plank on the weather side of the binnacle*, and all the accession of comfort, not to mention dignity, of a Lieutenant come upon you. I hope you will nevertheless condescend to your friends just as if nothing was, as the man said he would do when he was made a justice of the peace, and that you will still acknowledge your lubberly relations on shore notwithstanding.

Papa is now in town, much against all our wishes. There is a sort of a rumpus going on in domestic politics, which is much too dull to explain, but which is occasioned by the King's illness, and *may* end in the Prince of Wales being Regent.¹ Parliament is sitting upon this difficulty at this undue season, and has appointed a Committee of Peers to question the King's physicians. Papa, Sunday morning, on reading the newspapers, was surprised at finding himself one of this committee, obliged to order his chaise and set out for town instantly, amid a chorus of grumbling from all his widowed family. He comes back Saturday, we hope, and Althorp too, who has been in the same way obliged to go to London, as much against the grain as possible, to be sure, in this fine, warm, hunting weather.

The Duncannons are gone away this morning, after staying here a whole month, and making us like them more and more; and so, to conclude, Mama, Georgiana,

¹ He became Regent in February, 1811.

the two boys, Mr. Ocheda, and I are left, with the range of the house, and a few thousand books to pass the time away as fast as we can. Greek grammar (which I teach *soit dit sans vanité*, though I am not yet perfect mistress of the alphabet), a little reading of English history, and a little writing of English and French, together with carpenter's work, riding, and studying "Don Quixote," make, with plenty of *stuffing*, the principal employment of Fritz and George. Gin and I go on with our usual jobs, and Mama sits in her armchair as usual, enjoying the best health I have ever seen her in, I think. We shall have our solitude interrupted next week by people enough to make us twenty at dinner. Lady Jones and a little niece of hers; Lord and Lady Barnard,¹ a young couple who live in a hunting-box near this; Lord and Lady Clonmell,² who are a ditto couple, ditto, ditto, for they, too, are living near here in a hunting-box; Lady Louisa Vane,³ a young lady, sister to Lord Barnard, who is, they say, too much of a romp to have much chance of becoming ever a stationary inmate of this house; Lady Caroline Greville,⁴ sister to Lady Clonmell, who is in the same predicament, however she may wish it were otherwise; three *blue-stocking* gentlemen from London, very bad matches, but very good bookworms, coming for the books, and not for the belles; and ever so many Pytchley Club young gentlemen, thinking of nothing but hounds. That is to be our party—perhaps with the addition of the great John Bedingfield.

¹ Lord Barnard was afterwards second Duke of Cleveland; died 1864. He married, 1809, Lady Sophia Poulett, daughter of the fourth Earl Poulett. She died 1859.

² Thomas, second Earl of Clonmell, married Lady Henrietta Greville, daughter of the second Earl of Warwick.

³ Lady Louisa Vane married Major Forester in 1813, and died in 1821.

⁴ Lady Caroline Greville died unmarried in 1844.

a Bibliographical discussion 1809

L^D Spencer & Sig^r Ocheda



Mais oui Milord

non Monsieur

LORD SPENCER AND MR. OCHEMA.

From a drawing by Lady Spencer

To face p. 118.

CHAPTER V

1811-1812

THE letters of 1811 and 1812 are almost exclusively devoted to family matters and society. Much is to be learned from them in regard to the social customs of the times. In April, 1812, Lady Sarah refers to the rumours of her own impending engagement, but most of the letters on this subject have been destroyed.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
February 22, 1811.

MY DEAREST BOB,—I heard some talk about you last night from a most agreeable man—Lord Holland.¹ He is delighted at your liking his boy and having written about him. I know well that sort of enjoyment; I often feel it.

. . . All this fine weather will help poor, dear old Granny Lucan to get stout again; she has had a little feverish illness which to another person would have been of no consequence, but to her poor little frame of seventy-one was more serious. To-day she is up and in her pretty drawing-room, and in very good spirits and better looks than she has been yet. I sat there with her, and told her all about our dinner-party yesterday, which was very pleasant. Lord Holland was one of the company, who, as I told you, was an uncommonly agreeable, good sort of man; and so is Mr. Tierney, who dined here too—he makes one laugh every moment, without being the least like a

¹ Henry, second Lord Holland, “nephew of Fox and friend of Grey” (1773-1840).

professed wit. As to any other dissipation, I have not *tasted* it, as they say, this season.

28th.—I have been very gay since I made that little boast of being retired. I have been to two soirées—not assemblies, but whist parties—at Lady Carysfort's, Mr. Grenville's sister. There were but very few steady people there, and one card-table, where Papa risked his shillings, while Mama and Lady Carysfort, I and her daughters, sat amusing ourselves as we could. It was very pleasant to me. I delight in those girls; they are so thoroughly right and respectable, and, besides, have such warm, good hearts, and good educations, that their conversation is just what pleases me most of any. They are not very pretty, and rather cold to strangers—that is, entirely without coquetterie or vanity—so that I dare say they will remain the “Lady Probys” for ever.¹ But, such as they are, their little fingers are worth twenty of the common run of pretty misses to a person like me, who had rather be talked to, and well talked to, than smiled upon by the prettiest mouth in Christendom. *Chose que vous ne comprenez guère*, I warrant, and no wonder. A gay lieutenant and his maiden sister *ought* to have different minds on some subjects—on none more than that of young ladies.

You would have been quite of my opinion about the other gay place I have been at, and that was the play, where I saw the two fashionable pieces, “The Knight of Snowdoun” and “Bluebeard.” The first is, or means to be, the “Lady of the Lake” brought before you—all your imagination, when reading it, embodied and represented on the stage. I expected to be made angry by it, but was much more angry than I expected to be. All that a frightful little stick of an actress as *Ellen*, with red hair and skinny arms, could do to spoil her part was done, together with hideous music; disgusting comic characters brought in—Allan Bane turned into a silly clown, and Fitz-James into a sighing, whining, soft swain. In short, a horrid caricature of the poem, which I must try to drive clean out of my head before I can read the book again, or I shall be quite sick. After this came “Bluebeard,” and, do

¹ They did, save one, Lady Elizabeth, who married Mr. Wells in 1816.

you know, Bob, that certainly, since the first time I saw the playhouse, I never was so enchanted as at this dear "Bluebeard." It is a mere *spectacle*; but such delicious music, such good acting, such magnificent decorations, and at the end such wonderful machinery as it consists of would, I am sure, have made a child of Sir Isaac Newton. I quite trembled with delight, and could hardly walk steady out of the box. There is no describing it. Telling you there are thirty live horses on the stage, who act, die, just like rational creatures,¹ a castle on fire, a drawbridge broken down, a siege as tremendous as a real one—all this can only make you laugh at the notion of being seriously pleased at such a puppet-show; but if you could see it you would change your mind. . . .

March 18.—I have led so dissipated a life since I wrote last, that I feel quite altered, and grown rakish; we have done nothing but go to plays, operas, dinners, and all manner of gay things. Nay! Worse than all, Mama has been *At Home*. There's a wonder for you! I mean *at home* in the London language, at home to above one hundred people one evening. She means to do so every Friday, as long as we find the plan answer as well as it did last Friday, which was really very pleasant. She contrived so, by asking literally none but our own set of morning visitors, our whole stock of relations, who make up a good, large, and *sans vanité*, a very agreeable troop of people, the whole entire *Grenvilliade*, no bad company neither; and besides these, all the men who ever enter the house. They all came by ten o'clock, and went away by twelve, as we intended, to other assemblies, or to bed, so that our early hours were not disturbed the least by it. From there being no crowd, and very few dull people, it was quite different from common parties, for it was a talking party. I did not once hear those hated phrases, "How suffocating!" "What a squeeze!" "Have you been in the next room, it is even a worse crowd than this?" and so on, which I used to dread the sound of, when I *went out*, a few years since. Some people played at shilling whist, and some at billiards, and most of them got together in little talking parties, very comfortably. I dare say we shall get finely abused, as

¹ It was the first play in which horses were brought on the stage.

Mama has been quite determined in inviting nobody but those we are quite accustomed to see, and so all the rest revenge themselves. But we brave the vengeance; at the very worst it can only be exercised against us by a league of all our enemies never again to invite us, or any belonging to us, to any rout, drum, ball, party, concert or masquerade. Now, since in strict reasoning never being invited, and never going, to any such gayeties, amount after all to *very* near the same thing, we don't care a wondrous deal about it, and shall very calmly submit to seeing our chimney-piece void of all cards of invitation for ever and ever henceforward. So much for our party.

Miss Berry writes in her journal of this party on Friday, March 15, 1811: "In the evening went to Lady Spencer's before ten o'clock. An assembly in the drawing and billiard rooms of all the aristocracy of the Opposition and of every Grenville, male and female, in the world. The rooms are uncommonly handsome, in the old style of carving, gilding and damask. Everybody seemed pleased. Everybody piqued themselves upon coming early, and it is to be repeated every Friday."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 14, 1811.

All London is wild, we among the rest, about a German professor, Feinagle by name, who gives lectures on the art of memory—that is, teaches tricks and artificial means by which one may assist one's memory. He is very ingenious, and some of his lectures are entertaining, but I own I am somewhat bored with having to listen to one every day, in company with twenty people who meet here for that purpose. We have only had eight out of twenty lectures, and I am longing for the end like a schoolboy for the holydays. . . .

Robert Spencer must have come home soon after this letter was written, as there is a gap in the corre-

spondence till the following October, when Lady Sarah writes to him at Holkham.

WILDERNESS,
October 25, 1811.

You are on land and water the best of correspondents, my dearest Bob. Your letter gave me a famous laugh this morning, on my first getting up. Everything is *à point nommé* just as I wished. Mr. Coke¹ alone first, and then a vast number of people. If the party had been assembled on your arrival, you never would have known the true humours of a country gentleman farmer. I hope you like it. Oh, I am so very glad you have felt what it is to be a little bored with wool and carcases! Those catacombs, the offices of Holkham, I well remember, and the labyrinth of passages too, where Nanette and I had our candle blown out. There should we now be, I fancy, if just at that moment a little black man had not appeared, ten miles off, with a light. We took him for a servant. "Sir! Hullo, sir!" said Nanette, "pray lend us that candle, and tell us the way down." "Certainly, Ma'am," said the man, with an odd sort of smile on his face, and gave us his candle. We left him in the cruellest way in the dark, thinking still he must be the cook or butler, and knew his way blindfold. At a dinner of twenty people, an hour later, who should sit by Nanette, but the little black man! He was one of the guests! Do think of the floundering mire of fibs we were obliged instantly to plunge into, to try in vain to get clear of such a scrape! I remember it now with horror. As to your not shooting well, I am not surprized. A child, *little* child like you, I dare say you trembled all over, and could not take aim any more than I could, with the overpowering sensation of joy at actually being awake, and not *quite* delirious, on Norfolk ground with a gun.

We arrived here yesterday, and found this place as beautiful as ever. I think it is almost the prettiest and cheerfullest I know.² But I speak with reserva-

¹ Thomas William Coke, of Norfolk, the famous agriculturist (1752-1842); created Earl of Leicester in 1837.

² Lord Camden's place near Sevenoaks. The original name, Stidulf's Place, was changed to that which it now bears by Sir Charles Bickerstaffe in 1630. It is now the property of Lord Hillingdon.

tion ; I mean for an *old female*, not for a *young male*, because not a bit of shooting does it afford. We found them *en famille* ; nobody but Lord Camden's sister, Lady Elizabeth Pratt ; and we were greeted with as much kindness, to be sure, as ever was used towards anybody. They are good creatures, all of 'em. Today we expect Lord and Lady Lansdowne.¹ She is, I think, the person I, upon the whole, most admire of anybody I ever saw. "Then she must indeed be a miracle!" I dare say you say, Mr. Impudence ; but I think you would agree with me, even if Miss Coke's governess is recovered. I hope a closer examination *in the country* won't change my opinion of Lady Lansdowne.

The bells are ringing merry peals for the wedding of Lord Downshire² and Lady Maria Windsor. Much joy I wish 'em of it. Tied together this morning, to be loosed only in heaven. A good long tug, and a thought which must make a *leetle* twinge inevitable, I should think, at least on Lady M.'s part, when she looks and listens to the man to whom she must ever after "softly speak and sweetly smile," whether he talks nonsense or not.

ALTHORP,
November, 1811.

What a comfort is the thought that your detestable long jumble is over! And how I do long to receive your first letter from Plymouth. . . . Fanny Pratt writes me word Lord Camden is gone for a few days to shoot at Lord St. *Asaph* (forgetting the *s* at the end), which I do think the most murderous expedition for a pacific State-minister. The Duchess of Marlborough is dead. A week's mourning is approaching—nasty mourning. I *will* not wear anything black but a ribbon—do what they will.

ALTHORP,
December 10, 1811.

. . . We—that is, no fewer than Gin, I, George, and little Howard,³ with two grooms—have been scouring

¹ Third Marquis of Lansdowne. He married Lady Louisa Fox-Strangways.

² Arthur, third Marquis, married the eldest daughter of the fifth Earl of Plymouth, October 25, 1811. He died 1845, and she in 1855.

³ George, afterwards seventh Earl of Carlisle, and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

the country on poney-back. Heaven knows, we looked on our return as if we had literally *scoured* it, for we brought back on our petticoats, or *troisièmes*, many a pound weight of my dear native soil, well diluted with rain-water, *alias* mud. The day was very fine, and we brave ones enjoyed it vastly. To the honour of the sex be it spoken, we brave ones means the female part of the company, and Hodgekins,¹ who, tho' not a good rider, is afraid of nothing. Poor little puny Howard was not so well off. He was in a considerable state of alarm, and began his ride very pale; but however, as he was on a perfectly safe poney, with a long rein, and is near ten, we all with one consent took no sort of notice of this, and by degrees he plucked up a little valour, and came home quite proud of himself. Oh, he does want to be made a man of sadly, or he will be quite a *femmelette*. He talks of beauty, and dress, and poetry, and even novels, till I long to send him for a summer to sea, or to Brigstock, to make him a little more manly. He is in excellent hands here for that. His mornings are spent with Hodgekin in good stiff study with Mr. Godley; and then he is obliged to ride, and run about, and amuse himself stoutly, and be very little attended to, like our boys; so I really hope he will be improved even by this short visit. He is remarkably docile, and rather sensible too. . . .

Lady Jones's illness has made whist impossible for the evening, because see here [a sketch]; there's a plan. Now you see I should have no partner, and can't be supposed or expected to play. You can't think how often I have, in the morning, sat down and drawn, for my own satisfaction, a plan like that, to convince myself that the rubber would not be possible, or would do without me, in the evening. Now, as long as we go on *in statu quo*, it is all very well, but Bob, my good dear brother (I am sick to *think* of it, only for a *twinkle*), do conceive the chance, the possibility, of Mr. Knightley coming back while Lady Jones is ill and Papa away. Then do you see how your sister would be situated? Compelled to play at whist every night, and, whether winning or losing, equally wretched. Well, I'll not think of it, because, as the

¹ Hodge or Hodgekins, George Spencer's nickname.

hounds meet to morrow at *Snorscomb* (a pretty name), which is far from hence, and close to Preston, I am confident Mr. K. will not come back till Papa does, and then, *vogue la galère*. You see, Bob, this is not talking (writing still less); it is *thinking* upon paper; but I believe you would have it so, and therefore go on “Free as clouds, or sun, or gale, flow on, flow unconstrained my tale.” There’s a neat quotation for you. Poor Sir Walter Scott never was pressed into so unpoetical a service, I fancy, before, and I don’t think I quoted him correctly either. I am now going down, and I shall find Gin practising, Mama reading in the refuge, a turkey pie, *tendant les bras aux passans*, in the long library; Mr. Godley and the boys poring over their Latin and Greek in the square library.

ALTHORP,
December 16, 1811.

Here has been and still is such a gale of wind that how any of the trees or even the house escape being blown away I don’t understand. We have been enjoying its utmost fury on horseback, and really could hardly keep our course steady. It actually blew us aside, I really believe. Little Howard has given up riding altogether, so now we have only old Hodge with us; he does keep on his horse, but it is *avec moins de grâce* than anybody I ever beheld, certainly. . . . Papa is gone *to beat for a cock* in Nobottle Wood, that old and thankless business. . . .

ALTHORP,
December 17, 1811.

. . . I have just caught Papa, and made him give me a frank for you before he went out with Lord Morpeth and Mr. Gunning to ride over that useful lion, the Harleston pheasantry. He charged me not to omit to tell you that he had excellent sport yesterday in Nobottle Wood. They actually brought home *three woodcocks*, besides a few hares, a squirrel, an owl, and a cartload of mud at least, well spread over every part of them. Mr. Gunning was quite merry upon it, and as to Papa, he burnishes quite at the improvement of the old wood.

So you are going to Saltram. Well, I am so glad;

I shall love Lord Boringdon¹ for asking you. Now if you don't think his wife quite a delightful woman, you and I are very far asunder in matters of taste. I long for your account ; I hope he'll tell you to shoot some of his cocks ; Papa's mouth waters sadly at the description of their plenty, tho' after yesterday he sees nothing much *en noir* in shooting matters. . . . Old Hodges is gone with Papa ; it is not often he invites himself into a party of pleasure, so this is an unusual favour. He only wants to compare the different breeds of pheasants, I dare say. He is a nice old thing, and as happy as the day is long.

ALTHORP,
December 20, 1811.

Well, Heaven bless Lord Boringdon and Lady Boringdon and every living soul at Saltram, says I. What a very delightful nice thing it has been, that you should have passed such a comfortable day there ! So you like Lady Boringdon. Well, I was sure you would. How I do ; more than ever, I am sure. I do quite long to see her pretty face again, after her being so cordial to you. . . . Now I must tell you G. Morpeth has got two letters from Lord Boringdon about it, and they amused us a good deal. The first was written before he had seen you, and he was then in the persuasion that you were just gone to sea, a middy of twelve years old ; so he good-humouredly expresses some amusement at your having written him word that, owing to the fitting of the ship, you had not, he must be aware, the entire disposal of your own time. The second letter was when you were there. He says : " Judge of my surprise when after my mistake I saw Mr. Spencer not only in the uniform of a lieutenant, but appearing evidently possessed of every perfection, moral and physical, to fit him for the rank of an admiral." He seems much pleased with you and with your good-humour in bearing the disappointment about shooting. . . .

ALTHORP,
January, 1812.

. . . The accounts we get from London are worse and worse about the poor Regent. He has lost the

¹ John, afterwards first Earl of Morley (1772-1840). Lady Boringdon was daughter of Thomas Talbot, Esq.

use of his right hand and the palsy has risen to the elbow lately. His hand swells so that his rings were sawed off t'other day, and the torture is dreadful. He is to have a stamp for his signature.¹ It is a . . . What was to have followed is utterly beyond my power to guess. *It is a what?* This question I have pondered over in vain for two minutes, so I must give it up. I was called away in the middle of the sentence this morning by a noisy detachment of the family coming to whisk me off for a walk, ankle deep in snow. We all went, Althorp and all, and kept ourselves warm by trotting, screaming, and laughing; and had the *proud* gratification of coming back really over shoes in snow. Why is one always proud of having a deep snow to tell of? I feel quite a *démangeaison* to write to all my friends how deep it is here. Since that time I have been loitering shamefully, and Papa and Mr. Dibdin have been quite *full-cry* after a new-discovered black-letter book, and Mama has busied herself with committing Mr. Clarke of Welton *to paper*. I have just sent it off to Nanette, that she may put him into her collection of *portraitures*. It is one of the likest I ever saw done. Althorp and George have been following the track of a hare till they found her. A very glorious exploit.

SPENCER HOUSE,
March 3, 1812.

. . . This odious month of March always is a misfortune among us, and when it stops letters besides giving colds it really is a trial. We are, I believe, going to try its powers in this latter way to-night by going to the play; and our dear little quiet box has the advantage of rather more fresh air from the stage than everybody likes on their forehead. I can't describe the cold of it this time of the year. We are to see "Julius Cæsar," which they are just beginning to act. They say it takes *five hours*. Even Shakespeare, I fear, will not keep me awake so long.

To-morrow is to be an eventful day for me. Sophia—the fair Sophia—is going to leave me. I am to have instead of her a girl of seventeen, who has never been in any place. I wish I had passed the first fortnight

¹ It was only a severe attack of gout.

of the new ministry, I own ; because the first lesson in hairdressing I shall have to give already makes my poor head smart with anticipated pain. Change of ministry is not confined to my household, for many little ones are to take place in the Government. The Admiralty has been successively given by report to Lord Keith ! *Mr. Wellesley Pole !! Lord Mulgrave !!!* and now at last to Lord Melville,¹ for whom I heartily wish. He is son to the famous man of that name, and bears the character of a remarkably gentlemanlike, upright man, possessed of a very good understanding and a very good taste, I mean as to conduct. Now these are admirable qualities, and I have them from no suspicious authority, as you may believe ; for never was an opposition so furious as the present opposition, and therefore I suppose naturally never was so little candour stirring.

Some of the members of this same opposition are still venting *their* fury upon the beasts of the field—Althorp for one instance, nothing but the most urgent necessity can bring him here, even for a night. Well, the longest lane has an end, and so I suppose will the hunting season of this year, by the time we are all grown grey-headed. When once that end is passed, Althorp has positively astounded and amazed us all by declaring it to be his intention to act as Gin's *chaperon*, and go out to assemblies and balls again this spring. I should not very much wonder if, when he is swimming about in the vortex of dissipation (in which he will, to be sure, be rather a fish out of water), some clever angler, some sea-nymph with a *very* imperceptible net, should contrive to entrap his prudent Lordship. Oh, I think I could give some few, very few, bits of advice on the *shortest way* to do it, which would soon make any young lady mistress of the art ; and of the heart, too—and a good, steady, solid possession that heart would be ; well worth catching, I am sure. Well, it is a new stock of details opening for me ; you shall hear the first symptoms of success attending any attempt of the kind.

The family is very healthy and eventless ; not perfectly tranquil. No family can be that has a beauty

¹ Robert, second Viscount Melville, was made First Lord of the Admiralty in 1812.

belonging to it, for there are always conquests and admirers to watch and be anxious about. I need not tell you I mean Liz.¹ For the last fortnight we have heard and seen much of a most impassioned new lover of hers. In my life I never saw a poor young gentleman so far gone over head and ears in *la belle passion*, to all appearance. It is Lord Herbert,² your former schoolfellow. Liz does not, to use the *novel* phrase, make *an equal return*, but she does not appear to dislike him, and I declare I should be half inclined to believe it will end in the regular novel way, if I had not, alas! too lively a recollection of last year, and too strong a conviction that "men are deceivers ever." There's one of the very strictures I have so often told you are vulgar; and so was this, very vulgar, forget and forgive it, Bob.

Lord Herbert is handsome, *rather*; he is nobly born, *very*; he will have a fortune, *sufficient*; and his connection is admirable. His father is excellent, his father's wife, Katinka in short, is a person in whose society any young woman must, I think, both improve and be happy. Then the Dowager Lady Pembroke, and Lady Di, all are good and desirable companions; so that if it should happen, I shall be very full of hope that my sweet Liz will be in a very safe, let us hope and trust, in a happy situation. His father has just now taken him away to the country; why, I don't know. Perhaps he thinks him too young, perhaps he thinks him too hasty, perhaps— These perhapses are what occupy us all chiefly, just now.

As to any other change in the circle, none is likely, my Bob. I believe I have latterly often contrived to worry you by making you suppose (because some of us did suppose it) that a very old story respecting me myself was perhaps beginning again this year. But as the hero of that story has been staying out of town now almost two months, without seeming to remember the existence of your sister, I am now convinced that I was right, and others were wrong, and that the idea was quite a mistake altogether.

¹ Lady Elizabeth Bingham.

² This marriage never took place. Lord Herbert married, in 1814, Princess Octavia Spinelli, widow of Prince Buttera de Rubari. Lady Elizabeth married, in 1815, George Granville Harcourt, Esq., of Nuneham, and died 1838.

SPENCER HOUSE,
April 28, 1812.

It is but ten days since I wrote to you, and yet it seems to me a century. So many things have happened since, that, as they say, one measures time by the number of ideas which pass thro' the mind, as it flies by, it is no wonder that the last fortnight is to me magnified, and multiplied incalculably. Having first told you we are all well and most happy, I will proceed to acquaint you with the progress of our transactions. To begin like charity, at home, I will tell you in plain English *bowl'dly*, as Venables calls it, that I have completely regained my free and calm prospects of continuing in blessed singleness. I have for the last few months been pestering you with innuendos and enigmatical letters,¹ about a prospect of a change with regard to me being likely, in consequence of something like a renewal of *attentions*, I am inclined to say *hostilities*, on the part of a man you must be tired of the name of—Sir W. W. Wynn.² I have now to announce that *affair*, to use a fashionable phrase, is entirely—for ever—for aye—over—gone—past—fled. I have to humble myself further, by the unfeminine confession, that it was not, *this* time, over in consequence of a refusal on my part, but in consequence of my quondam swain having thought better of it. He left town, as I told you; and returned to town, evidently resolved upon preserving an independence he has grown too much accustomed to, to take leave of it with a good grace. He is a man of an honourable mind, and has behaved on this occasion perfectly right, and heaven knows I thank him from the bottom of my heart, for I have never in my life felt happier than I have felt since I have been secure (as secure as human being can be) of a quiet and unbroken *avenir* in this world!

Quiet I can't quite call our present situation, for we are all, great and small, in a fluster, but a very delightful one, about my dearest Liz. *She*, I think, is in a fair way of being the first to break the circle, or rather, enlarge it, by a most satisfactory accession. Lord

¹ These letters have been destroyed.

² Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, sixth Baronet (1772-1840), married, in 1817, Lady Henrietta Clive, daughter of the first Earl of Powis

Herbert, after *six long weeks* of absence, has returned constant and warm as the sun in the tropicks ; he is, in short, *il pastor fido* ; and tho' matters are not a bit clear yet, we all expect that about next autumn, when he is of age, all impediments will be removed. His extreme youth makes *his* father rather wish for a delay —something of pride, and a little obstinacy, I must say, make *her* father protest, that if a delay is insisted upon, he shall never consent to anything like a mutual engagement being entered into now. However, this is a matter of *words* only, I do think ; and Cupid is but a weak sort of creature if he can't get over such small difficulties ; for he certainly is exerting his *whole* power in this case, whatever that power may be. I was in the capacity of chaperon to my sweetest Liz, on our eventful last Friday's party, where the first meeting between the two young people, as they say, took place ; and, to be sure, any gentleman or lady with such pale faces, dry lips, and senseless brains, as they were, I never saw. They neither of them knew what they said or did, and I was of the greatest use in putting in a *water-gruellish* sort of observation every now and then, just to fill up the pauses between the nonsense that came out at first. Soon, however, Lord H. recovered his senses, and we had some good conversation. He is well-disposed, generous, and good-humoured, rather young for his age, but that will mend. He is to spend the summer abroad in Sicily, and then in September he returns . . . faithful still ?

. . . Ah ! who can tell ? But if *not*, he is no loss, that's very clear. He tells her now, what we all think a very pretty speech, and what (*entre nous soit dit*) I have been told by the best authority—viz., her Ladyship—over and over again, till I begin to think I have heard it often enough, not being the least blinded or dulled by any bandeau whatever, that “he is delighted his father allows him to go abroad, because it will give him an opportunity of proving to her that no absence or distance can alter his feelings.” Ahem ! . . . That, you see, is very neat, and sounds as if it would not be forgotten in a hurry. She behaves about it perfectly naturally, and yet with all the proper feminine reserve and delicate quietness that one can wish. In short, so as to confirm all our good opinion of her, I own I

rather wish the voyage to Sicily was begun, for the flirtation now is so public, it makes the talk of London, which I hate, and so does she. I can't express the delight the marriage would give me, and it would be a real blessing to us all, I trust. So you see, my Bob, we are up to our ears in matrimonials.

Mama and Gin go about balling very merrily, and Gin is still extremely liked and admired, nothing *particular*, however, yet. Last night they were at a ball, and a young gentleman gave Mama an epigram by a Mr. Erskine, Lord Erskine's brother, which we think good enough. It is on the alteration in your Admirals' buttons. . . .

"For the Navy a button amuses the town ;
To the anchor is now to be added a crown.
Keep Perceval Premier (I speak without rancour),
The Crown of itself will soon come to an anchor."

Mr. Perceval was murdered on May 11, but the Tories continued in office under Lord Liverpool, much to the disgust of the Whigs. Miss Berry writes in her journal, Friday, June 12, 1812: "Went to Lady Spencer's—a large party (for her). Lords Camden, Grey, and everyone on the Opposition side, laughing with a very bad grace." "June 29.—I went to the theatre in Lady Spencer's box, to see Mrs. Siddons take leave of the stage."

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

SPENCER HOUSE,
July 7, 1812.

We are living in anxious expectation of going off to Ryde—quite dead sick, all of us, of London and its neighbourhood, and hungry, famishing, for sea air. I am delighted at having a home there, out of the village; for this summer shoals of London friends of ours are going, and Westfield will be very agreeably independent of their society if we please. One of our same friends, to my utter astonishment and some pleasure, and more curiosity, has announced himself

as our visitor, and has invited himself to be an inmate of Westfield for some time. It is a man I have often mentioned to you—Mr. Lyttelton. What he is out of a London ball-room I have yet to learn. I know that in one he is the most extraordinary mixture of brilliant wit, childish nonsense, frivolous small-talk, and a universal sort of scrambling information, which seems all to come out, whether he will or not, from an incessant flow of wild spirits. What such a being can be like at a place like Ryde, all day long with one, is so beyond me that I am really curious about it. He is a great friend of Althorp's, just his age, and as unlike him as possible, *extérieurement* at least. If I find him unlike throughout, I shall soon be heartily tired of his company. At any rate, I am glad to grow really acquainted with a London *beau*, it is a gratification I never had before. I ought, to finish Mr. Lyttelton's picture, to tell you that he dances out of time, and is remarkably handsome—the two most striking properties of his one hears mentioned in this thinking town.

They all went to Ryde soon after, and there is a long letter to Robert Spencer from his sister, recalling the times they had had together at Westfield.

. . . Oh, of all the blessings granted by Heaven to help one cheerily thro' this world of trials, surely the greatest, the most precious, is memory—that power which brings back past happiness, absent friends, and all that made former times delightful, as fresh, as new-seeming, as if they were present. I cannot at all describe the charm which this feeling gives to every nook and corner about this dear place. . . . You know, you can understand what I feel in each place blessed by such recollections. . . .

Mr. Lyttelton went to Ryde in August, though apparently he changed his mind at first, as Lady Sarah writes on July 31, 1812:

. . . I think I told you that we were to be visited here by Mr. Lyttelton; but to-day's post has brought us, instead of him, a most capital letter from him, of excuse. Papa wishes he could get one such every

week. If he did but give our wild friend a hint of this, he would take it, and perform it for the rest of the summer, I dare say.

A month later, however, he seems to be quite a settled visitor, though the casual manner in which Lady Sarah writes of him was no doubt merely intended to throw dust in the grand-maternal eye.

To the Dowager Countess Spencer.

WESTFIELD,
August 29, 1812.

. . . Mr. Lyttelton's spirits are nearly as high as ever. He stays with us till Monday, and has continued enlivening us in a very pleasant manner ever since you left here. He has dropped the character of a mere buffoon with a very good grace, which makes him much the more agreeable as a constant companion, and we all begin to think him a very amiable person. A perfect stranger among one's most private family circle in a small house is, however, on the whole, not entirely a comfortable thing; and I don't think our gay guest will be very much regretted. . . .

CHAPTER VI

1813

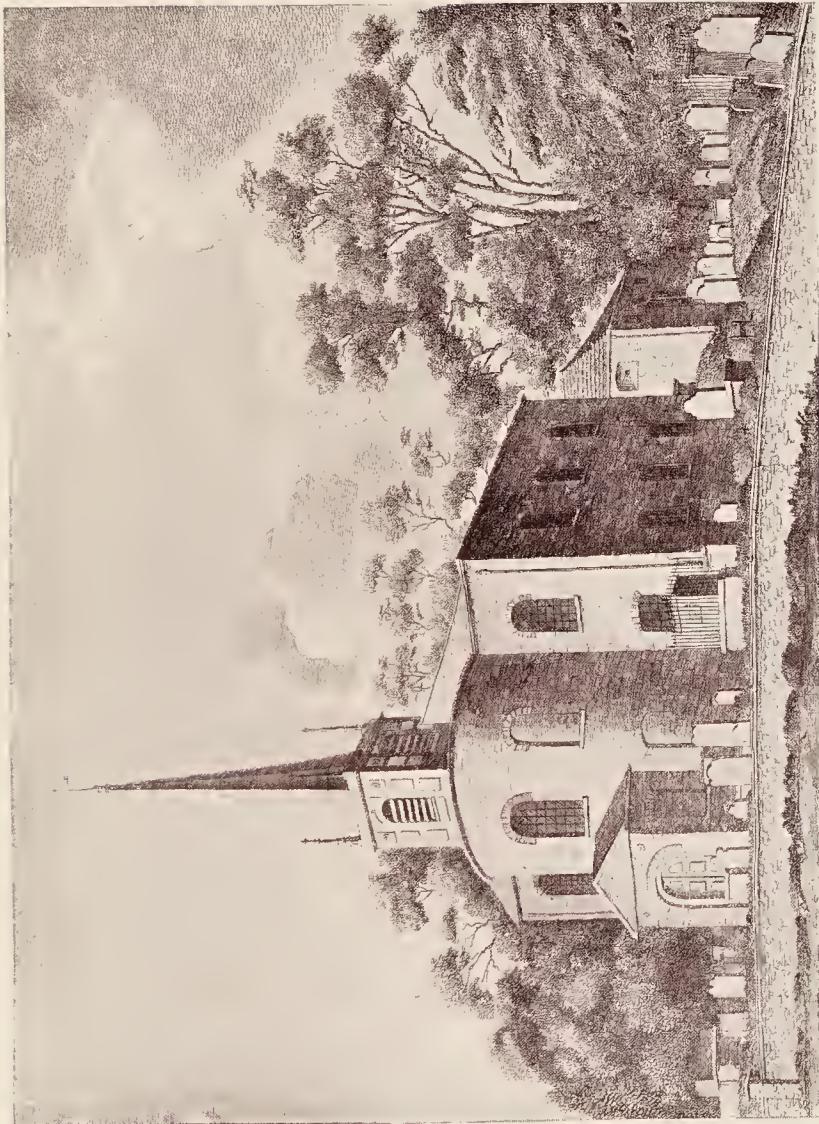
THERE is a gap in the correspondence of five months, and it is resumed in January, 1813, with Lady Sarah's announcement of her engagement to Mr. William Henry Lyttelton, the second son of the first Baron Lyttelton. He succeeded to the title, as third Baron, on the death of his elder brother, George Fulke, in 1828. An account of Mr. Lyttelton has been given in the Introduction to this volume, and it is only necessary to add that he represented Worcestershire in Parliament from 1807 to 1820.

The marriage took place in March, and in the following June Mr. and Lady Sarah Lyttelton started for a prolonged trip to Scandinavia and Russia, as the more familiar parts of Europe were not then in a favourable state for ordinary peaceful travellers. The record of the journey is interesting, because it describes countries which were not then familiar to English people, and also because it contains accounts of the leading society in which Mr. and Lady Sarah Lyttelton moved.

To the Hon. Robert Spencer.

January 13, 1813.

MY BELOVED BOB,—I have not written to you for three weeks. Not for want of something to say; not, as usually is my excuse, because “we have lived a



WIMBLEDON CHURCH IN WHICH MR. AND LADY SARAH LYTTELTON WERE MARRIED.

Pulled down and rebuilt in 1843.

To face p. 136.

hum-drum life—quite a nunnery; no news, no chance of events." No, my dearest Bob, it has been so occupied—by anxiety first, and lately by a new and half-painful sort of happiness—that writing, except a minute journal to Nanette, not fit to be sent out of the country, has been totally impossible to me. I have now the task of announcing to you a real great *circle event*. I can only do it *en gros* yet; details I will send in plenty by-and-by. I am going to be married—there's the point. And tho' I have written it often and think it *always*, somehow I can hardly believe or understand it yet at all. Althorp has written it to you. Clifford, who has spent the last few days here, is writing you the result of *his* observations, and I hope that out of these letters you will collect some sense. I despair of putting any into mine, though to-day, as my future husband (yes, it is really true; come, let me believe it), Mr. Lyttelton, is hunting, I am somewhat more calm than is my usual case. Now, Bob, do you remember I wrote you word he was coming to visit us at Ryde last summer, and I described him to you as I then thought I knew him—a most entertaining lively rattle, whom I could not help suspecting to have more in him than at first appeared, and I said I was curious to make acquaintance? Well, to Ryde he came, and very soon I found that not only he possessed a heart even superior to his most superior abilities, but I could not help thinking that he appeared attentive to me. I resisted this fancy stoutly: he is a younger brother, not rich, and I could not for a moment suppose that he could think seriously of marrying, much less of marrying me. However, he has been here a fortnight, and at last, the day before yesterday, it all came out. Papa and Mama are perfectly delighted, so is Althorp, so is everybody who loves me and knows him.

As to describing or expressing the extreme wish I have—for you to be acquainted with him, and to learn to love him, my Bob—it is in vain to attempt it. I shall not attempt either to give you any idea of his character; it is such as to ensure my happiness, if it is not wholly destroyed by my own fault. If I do throw it away, I shall deserve anything bad. You must excuse my incoherent and uncomfortable style, dearest, I am sure you will! You cannot imagine the state of mind into which the certainty of being preferred by the person

whom reason and inclination greatly approve, and the prospect of so awful a change of life and accession of duties, throws me. Nothing short of this could have made me so very selfish as to have written all this about myself alone. Alas! it is not for want of anxious interest about you, my Bob. Where are you, what is happening to you? Clifford can only guess, no more can we. Now, God bless you, my dearest Bob! My next letter shall be written soon and fully. Mind, I shan't for some months certainly, perhaps a year, become a matron. It is near the usual time of a return from hunting, and I am getting into my usual fidget at the prospect of a visit and conversation, which I must, however, learn to be accustomed to soon, or it will be sad work indeed.

God bless you once more, dearest. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
February 10, 1813.

. . . What a great blessing is the account you send me of dearest Fritz! Good God, what blessings you are to us! What happiness is mine all round me—slippery, dangerous, blinding happiness! Just at this moment the sun is shining as bright as in the country; the Guards are marching thro' the park, playing a merry tune with drums and trumpets; the air is fresh and reminds me that spring is on its way, and my *intérieur* is so full, so brimful of perfect delight, that it well accords with the cheerfulness of the scene. For the clock is fast wearing away the minutes to the happy hour of twelve, when a well-known step will sound along the passage, and a well-known voice be heard at my door, announcing my daily visit from him on whom I do feel my happiness hangs and depends with something of a sensation I won't attempt to describe or express. If I could succeed in giving you an idea of what it is to respect, and admire, and love with one's whole heart, a person whose warm affection one is sure of possessing, and with whom one is assuredly to spend one's future life, in the most intimate, the most sacred of all connections, I should be afraid, my Bob, that you would forthwith look about for some Maltese fair one, or perhaps some Greek damsel, to realize my description. But that

would not do, Bob, for half my happiness proceeds from knowing that it is built upon *real reason*, that all those I have always loved and looked up to entirely agree with me in opinion as to the reasonableness of my prospects, and that I am of a sober age, well experienced in the world, and so well able to tell that what I now approve I shall always approve. For I consider myself as on the verge of twenty-six, about as old as a man of thirty *odd*, as they say. And Mr. Lyttelton, tho' from his *personal advantages* (I fancy they call it) he looks probably younger than I do, yet by the parish register he certainly is five years older, thank goodness! So wait, Mr. Bob, wait, wait. My next packet letter will be written in a fuss, because in about that time I shall be looking at the grand event of marriage as a *very* near one. We shall go and perform the awful ceremony at Wimbledon, there likewise spend the honeymoon, then return here; for our kindest and best of all Dads and Mams take us in to this very house for the two months before we go to summer it at our beautiful home in Worcestershire. There's a whirl! Oh, heavens, why ain't I a little afraid of the change? But I ain't—I cannot. . . .

They were married on March 3, 1813.

The Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew to a Friend.¹

March 5, 1813.

Being somewhat better this morning, though not well, I hasten to accomplish my promise and give you an account of dear William's matrimonials. We left Davies Street *tête-à-tête* in chaise and four about two o'clock. He appeared in very good spirits—talked on indifferent matters till we reached the Lodge at Wimbledon. This said Wimbledon is quite a country seat, and there is at least half a mile's drive through a pretty park before you reach the house. This gave time for the gentleman to grow rather nervous; he said, "When she hears the carriage how her heart will beat!" from whence I inferred that his was not at that moment very peaceably resting within him. I

¹ Mrs. Pole-Carew was Mr. Lyttelton's sister.

gave him my hand ; he said : " Do not make me shed tears before the time." We drove up to the door, were shown into a handsome drawing-room. Lady Spencer said we were a quarter of an hour before the appointment. I answered that was all right. He was soon sent for, and in about ten minutes we were summoned to march in procession to the church. Lady Sarah being extremely anxious to have it as private as possible, the party consisted merely of her sister and two brothers and I myself.

The church stands within about 200 yards from the house through a little shrubbery. She walked slowly between her father and William, seeming as if she could hardly support herself, well dressed, but not finely. The church is so small that it gave me the idea of a private chapel, just room for us to kneel round the Communion Table. The service was extremely well performed by Mr. Allen, Lord Althorp's former tutor, a man much attached to the family. The parties concerned said their lessons very audibly, though with much feeling on both sides. When William signed his name to the register Mr. Allen shook him by the hand and said, " God bless you, Sir." I never shall forget the look with which he returned the benediction. Lord and Lady Spencer then embraced him and seemed to accept him as a very dear son. We then walked back rather more briskly than we went, and found a *collation* with all the delicacies of the marriage season, of course including an enormous plumb cake, to which we sat down. Lord Spencer soon reminded William that the post would soon go out, and that it was expedient a letter should be dispatched to Hagley.¹ William had no mind to quit his seat, but after making some slight resistance, went out, saying he would not disobey Lord Spencer's first command. Lady Sarah then retired to be quiet for a few minutes in her own room. She said all sorts of sisterly and friendly things to me, looked as well as I have ever seen her, and certainly has a most interesting countenance.

William soon sent for me to show me a very delightful letter. His heart seemed overflowing with joy, with peace and *good-will towards men* that seemed to extend to every living soul around him. He talked to

¹ To Lord Lyttelton, his half-brother.



Sarah, Lady Lyttelton.
from a portrait at Hagley after J. Jackson, R.A.

me of his Sarah the night before he was married in terms of rapturous admiration ; he said ever since she had consented to be his, he had felt quite another man, that he hoped he was already a better, as he was certain he was a more religious, one from the force of her example ; the conformity in their ideas and principles on every subject was something wonderful, and such as must make their union only increase in felicity as it was strengthened by time.

I left them soon after four o'clock, one munching a hunch of dry bread, the other relishing a piece of hard biscuit, side by side on a sofa, looks beaming with love and joy. Lord and Lady Spencer were to leave the coast clear immediately after dinner, and Wimbledon is to be their headquarters during the compleat honeymoon. They both said they wished their solitude to be occasionally interrupted, and made me almost promise that I *would dine and sleep there, before it was long.*

The following June Mr. Lyttelton and his wife started for a tour in Sweden, then much more inaccessible and more rarely visited than it is now. The rest of Europe was convulsed with the effort to subdue Napoleon, but Sweden was so far removed from the seat of war that they could hope to arrive there without a strong probability of being taken prisoners on the way by the French privateers. Lady Sarah wrote to her family from London, where she and her husband were planning their journey.

To the Countess Spencer.

LONDON,

June 22, 1813.

. . . Prince Koslovski t'other day, hearing Lady Talbot saying she was going into the country, said, "Is your ladyship going to squat there ?" meaning "to stay the season out," which he shortly and strongly expressed by that pretty word. He has a much better, or rather a much worse, slip-slop, which makes a deal of joking about town, but can't

be written. Madame de Staël¹ is *the* thing, tho'; she has put all the bears' noses out of joint. She has two thousand a year, and wrote over orders before she came to have a very good house taken for her, *bien montée, dix couverts tous les jours et des logis à tous les théâtres*. How long do you think she will last?

SHEERNESS,
June 27, 1813.

. . . Mr. L. is gone to the *Leveret*; her captain we saw last night; he gives us up the whole cabin, and seems most hospitably disposed, so that with a fine wind and fair weather I don't a bit dread the voyage, tho' the *Leveret* is small. Captain Wills says we shall be four or five days about it. Meanwhile the wind is in our teeth direct, so here we are stationed for a good while, I dare say. We are most agreeably lodged here on board His Majesty's ship *Vindictive*, cleared, fixed to the ground, and fitted up like a house.

SHEERNESS,
June 29, 1813.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—I do believe this will be my last epistle from this place. The east wind they say has nine lives, and will take a good deal of killing; but I think he looks moribund in good earnest at last. We shall be vastly glad indeed to go; the time is wearing away, and this is unprofitable enough, and the total want of a green thing to look at or a sweet whiff to breathe except the cauliflowers at dinner and the smell of my honey-water, begins to be painful. The port-holes of this house look out upon a timber yard, floated at high water, and stinking horribly of mud at low water; beyond is the harbour, which to be sure is pretty and animated in fine weather, I dare say, but now looks so hazy and dull that it is better to keep one's eyes on board.

P.S.—Since sealing this, I hear the convoy (114 sail) are all getting under weigh, the wind westerly, and we shall be off.

By July 15 they had landed at Göteborg, known in England as Gothenburg.

¹ The famous Mme. de Staël, authoress of "Corinne."

GÖTHEBORG,
July 15, 1813.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—Heaven be praised I can at length announce to you that we are arrived, landed, settled, and prosperous, on Swedish ground since yesterday, after our long voyage. The said voyage however was not much to be complained of after the first four wretched days we spent so unwell under the hatches, dead qualmish, tho' neither of us really very sick. Well, after we recovered and the gales abated (by the way, they were gales; real stiff ones too) we reappeared on deck, and I got into sea ways wonderfully well. I mean that I am very fond of tea with goat's milk, of dinner dressed by a negro, of Irish stew and naval pease soup; and that I drink water out of the fore-hold with tolerable composure, and sleep like a top on a narrow sofa, with two upright boards fixed by it to save me from being rolled into the cabin by every heel of the brig. In short, not only that I was perfectly well, but quite happy on board for the last eight or nine days. As to my husband, he is quite at home at sea of course, from old experience. As to describing this place or telling you how it has astonished me, I cannot; I am so taken up with staring and wondering. . . . We are very well lodged at Blom's Hotel, and dine at a very nice eating house a little way off, where they give us excellent soup and fish, and bring us of their own accord a large dish of wood strawberries and a great bowl of milk after dinner, which really makes one too happy after living on board a ship. We get good bread besides, delicious water, and good tea and coffee, brought us by a very pretty, tidy girl in her smart dress. In short, it is more entertaining altogether, much, than I had imagined. . . .

It thunders and rains sadly; the heat is extreme, but feels to me not the least relaxing or oppressive, and I can't find that there is one dark hour in the night. Nothing can be finer than the colour of the twilight or the softness of the evening air. We walked on the banks of the Gotha yesterday after dinner, and it was really delicious. . . . I feel a good deal inclined to tell you some of what I am full of, about my husband's kindness and care which really do increase, if

possible, and surpass all I had hoped or expected. But it would be endless, and you probably guess it all. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to the Countess Spencer.

MY DEAR LADY S.—I have not read Sal's epistle, but as I see there is a great deal of it, I take it for granted that it contains all the great features—and I suppose I need only give my certificate of one great fact—viz., that aforesaid Sal is really quite as well as ever I saw her in my life, and I think as pleased as Punch. The navigation was, it must be owned, very trying; at least if narrow quarters, bad air, water ditto, and a thousand awkward circumstances, the least of which would have driven a fine lady mad, can be considered so. But the dear girl made light of it all, and was always as smiling as ever, after the seasickness left her, which it did in three or four days. She was very often much diverted, and laughing *de bon cœur*; and when this was not the case it was, “Oh, how pleasant this will be to recollect.” She was really delighted, as well she might be, with the perpetual good-humour and gallantry of the captain and his officers, and in fact of almost every tar in the vessel; for they were all running to help her whenever she moved her little finger. Now we shall do very well, I see, for everything is in the fairest train imaginable. . . .

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Countess Spencer.

GÖTHEBORG,
July 16, 1813.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—. . . The whole town is new, an old one having been burnt down five years ago, and it is therefore wonderfully clean looking and thriving in every part. There are very few carriages, which makes one not feel any inconvenience from the want of a *trottoir*. The people I do think delightful. They seem not clever as far as countenance can be judged by; but always smiling; you never hear a squabble in the streets, and every thing seems to go on quietly and peaceably. Music is to be heard in

every corner; fiddles, harps, and singing. I should like them better if they would open their windows, but they never do. Really ours are the only ones to be seen from hence, in spite of the extreme heat; and the women of rank are dressed in pélisses, velvet ones, to walk in the streets. Two English travellers, a Sir something Riddell and Mr. James, his travelling companion or tutor, introduced themselves to us yesterday, and set off afterwards for their tour in Germany. Their departure was most comical; the rats of horses with their rope harness, four abreast, dragging a large heavy barouche with five people on it, and the amazing length of bustle in fastening these horses in, and the *baragouing* and piece of work of all the people concerned made it the most curious contrast to an English inn door on such an occasion, and took one a good three hours watching. To give you a notion of Swedish honesty, Sir John Riddell sent off a little cart full of baggage of his strong boxes, and many small parcels loosely heaped upon it, from hence to Stockholm, there to wait for his return from Germany, under the care only of a Swedish peasant who drove the cart, and is an utter stranger to him. This is always done, and no instance occurs of any of the things being stolen.

GÖTHEBORG,
July 18.

We are just come in from a lion-gazing walk. It being Sunday, and I feeling very stout, ventured out at noon. . . . We went to look into the church, which is for all the world like an English one inside. A clergyman with a canting, bad voice was preaching extempore to an immense congregation; people crowding about the doors outside at prayers, and a great appearance of decent solemnity in all their countenances, even to the lowest ranks outside the church. The organ was ill-played, but the singing very good, in full chorus of all present. Then we saw a review in the market-place. Cavalry mounted on horses which put me exactly in mind of those in "Bluebeard"—little prancing, long-maned things, perfect contrasts to the Horse Guards. The town is full of the German Legion just now, and so many English are about, one hears it often spoken, and I shall be

glad to go on to some place where the Swedish manners are more unmixed, I think. The worst thing in this part of the world seems to me the money, which is all paper or very small copper. The paper is so very thick and large that really one ought to have a waggon to convey it with one. Living and travelling are very cheap; but all sorts of silks, gloves, books, and everything you want to buy, ridiculously dear. I don't know whether I ain't boring you with such a long detail about the country, but my head is so bewildered and full of curiosity and wonder that I cannot help it. Our beds answer famously, and after the first night Rowland and Roberts¹ had no bugs in theirs for a wonder. . . .

ASBOGA,

July 25, 1813.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—We are thus far safe, well, and much, very much, delighted with our journey. I must begin by saying that, *pour mon particulier*, the pleasure I receive from every step I go is not to be described, and I am sure the recollection of this tour will be a delight to me as long as I live. It is one of the very greatest pleasures to be writing to you, and yet I don't know the least how to set about it, I have such a heap of things to say—such a heap! Well, have at you, I'll set off, and Heaven preserve me from mishaps on paper, as well as on the road! Our appearance on said road is so very ridiculous that I spent the first few miles in a titter at it. First, our post-chaise, containing Mr. L. in a black cap and shooting-jacket, and me in a brown gown and coloured apron. Item, a great *sac de voyage*; item, a library of loose books; item, eggs in Lady Clermont's boxes, biscuits and wine for luncheon. Then, on the dicky, *the Sieur Wilson*, our—what shall I call him?—guardian angel, champion, guide, and perfect wonder, in the shape of a little, sharp-looking German like an Italian, in a rusty black cap, a more rusty blue greatcoat, and a yet more rusty huge sabre, with a whip of the very worst kind. He is surrounded by goods of his own chiefly consisting of a tumbler and spoon, used by him to drink glass after glass of *eau sucrée*, his only refreshment at every inn. He drives four horses abreast, at

¹ Lady Sarah's maid and Mr. Lyttelton's valet.

the average rate of nine miles an hour, the road being as good the whole way as it is through Wimbledon Park—not a rut to be seen; you bowl along as smoothly as possible, and as quick as the horses can go. They are poneys, very pretty, and in better condition than English post-horses, and never do anything wrong that I can see, except, indeed, you call wrong the way of going down hill, which did somewhat surprise me at first, but which I have learnt to delight in—full gallop, the best pace, quite like a *ramasse* down Mont Cenis, and the steeper the hill the better, Wilson all the time halloing and brandishing his whip, and standing up quite *en triomphateur*. But the hills are very short, and as to a *corniche*, or anything alarming in them, we have not passed one. A peasant generally mounts the box with Wilson, and such a peasant! Such loads of long red or sandy hair, and such a stupid face and horrid figure (for I never beheld so ugly a race as the Swedish countryfolk), and dressed up in thick ticking or sky-blue cloth! Wilson addresses them always as one might do a *very* troublesome dog, with very happy effect. They come with us to see after their horses, for they bring them at every stage, none being kept at the inns. Such is our carriage. It is followed by the *lilla vagn* (little coach)—viz., a Swedish barouche; a cart, that is, with a barouche seat, occupied by beds, trunks, canteens, bread-baskets, and among them all the gentle Mrs. Rowland, in great state, always smiling, whirled along the road *ventre à terre* like us, by the skill of Mr. Roberts, who drives full as well as Mr. Wilson, and, except that he does not sing German songs *à gorge déployée* and repeat verses as loud, makes all due noise like him to encourage the poneys. They, too, have kept a lout attendant. Well, fancy this procession driving through this beautiful country, all in great glee, the weather most heavenly, a clearness of air and a total want of all sharpness and a colour over the view which you, who know the South of Europe, can conceive, but which I could not before; and plenty of books if there is a dull bit of road, and good fun to be derived from every difficulty, overbalanced as it is by amusement, and I think you will not wonder at my liking it. The most beautiful things I have seen yet

are the cataracts at the Gotha at Tröllhatten, and Lake Wener from Lidköping. We spent a day at Tröllhatten; it was our first *couchée* from Götheborg. We find everywhere rooms enough, dry, airy, and sometimes clean; most delicious water, quite like Malvern; famous eggs, milk, cream, strawberries, and bread. With these always to be found, and our own dear portable soup, and a stock of cold provisions we laid in at Götheborg (alas! you know we bungled about our preserved beef, and missed it after all), we are, you see, very well off for eatables. Sometimes we get soup and fish at the inns, and when we do they are always excellent.

STOCKHOLM,
July 30, 1813.

. . . We do not wonder at all at your admiration of the Vittoria victory;¹ it is universally talked about hereabouts as the greatest event that has happened of late years, and it makes one feel quite proud in foreign parts to be of Lord Wellington's nation. Well, I own I think much more of other things, and can only repeat to myself: "So they are all quite well; so Bob is not come, but they will have him soon; so Nan and Liz and George and the dear Duncannons are by this time all together at Westfield; so Papa makes signals at Captain Page, Mama sits listening and being rather bored with the *commerce lontain*;" and I go on fancying I see and hear it all, and have taken out a new lease of comfort about you, my dearests, to make my many blessings and comforts quite complete. . . .

We know little of this place yet. But driving through the town is enough to fill one with admiration at it. It really is most beautiful—large, very open and airy, abounding in magnificent buildings, and built upon very uneven, indeed almost mountainous ground, on a most beautiful arm of the lake, or river, or sea, for I don't quite know what to call it yet. All I know of it is that it is crossed by a handsome bridge, which occupies the centre part of the great place, one side of which is taken up by the Royal Palace, one other by the Duchess of Sudermania's, and one other by the great theatre—all immense buildings. The

¹ Fought on June 21. Wellington inflicted a crushing defeat on Joseph Bonaparte, King of Spain.

Royal Palace really strikes me, who have never seen any but Saint James's, as almost sublime. It would make me a courtier to live in sight of it, I fear. This is chiefly from its vast size and symmetry, and its being magnificently situated on a very high *rampe*, and to two enormous bronze lions which are before it. For, besides these circumstances, it has not much real magnificence—no colonnade, and not built of stone, but oh, shame! of brick and stucco. However, it is certainly most royal, and the Crown Prince, on looking round him, has reason to be satisfied. So have we—to pass from great things to small—with our palace, or lodgings, in this hotel; they are exceedingly clean and airy, well furnished, *et nous vivons en prince*. The cheapness of travelling in this country is quite comical. We have performed our touring hitherto—viz., 300 miles—travelling quite leisurely, in ten days; five days' living at Götheborg, purchasing a very dear little barouche, being cheated at one or two inns, being five hungry people in company, allowing ourselves every possible convenience and luxury, wages to the courier—all this for £90 sterling. . . .

To Lady Georgiana Spencer.

STOCKHOLM,
July 30, 1813.

MY SWEET GINNY,—. . . I have given a sort of description of what we have seen in this fine town to Mama, therefore shall confine myself to very home news to you. We live, an please you, in very pretty rooms up a number of stairs, in one of the tall, flat-faced houses composing our street. The houses are all six tall stories high. Shops very ugly outside; I must try their contents soon, for tho' I dress myself in plain white, with a white bonnet, and a brown spencer, and appear to me to look for all the world like a Swede, except that I can't help having black eyes and sharp elbows, I am stared at so vastly, with such extreme wonder, in walking the streets, that it must be, I have settled it, my extreme, and really after all, dazzling beauty. This must be veiled and shawled and shaded by a bonnet like this [a sketch], all covered with very large bows of yellow or scarlet ribbon, for so

dress the Swedish ladies. . . . Think, my dearest Gin, yesterday was my birthday—think of the last ! Heavens ! if anybody had foretold to me then where and how I should spend the next !

STOCKHOLM,
August 5, 1813.

Since I sent off my letters from this place, we have heard such bad accounts of the post here, I mean of its insecurity, and the certainty that our letters will be opened, and perhaps detained, especially if directed to the Foreign Office in London, that we have been obliged to determine to send only by messengers once a fortnight. . . . Well, now I must proceed with some Swedish news. I left off Saturday, I fancy, when we intended a dinner next day at Mr. Arfwedson's, which we performed. He lives at a place about three miles off, called the Park, and it is really difficult to conceive a pleasanter evening. Mrs. Arfwedson is a very pretty feminine little woman, speaking the best French of any Swede we have seen. I can't say how I enjoyed talking with a woman at all ; it was above a month since I had done so, except to Rowland, on whom I could not help looking with a sort of affection, as a creature of my own kind. Then we had a set of people besides, who are said to be the very best specimens, and I think they must be so, for they make up a very agreeable, lively, and well-bred society. M. de Rosenstein was the most remarkable. . . . He is, however, no fair criterion of the Swedes, being looked upon as the cleverest man here by far. Then there was the Count and Countess Mörner ; he is the Governor of the town, and dull. She is very pleasant, fair, and fat, and exceedingly civil to us. Witness our being to dine with her to-day, and be taken by her to a great concert at the Opera. She and her husband left the Park before supper, to go to the Queen's soirée ; and to be sure I could hardly believe my senses when I heard this, and saw her dressed in a plain dark grey silk gown, blue sash, and blue hat with grey feathers, and was told that was the *habit de cour*, the only one allowed. Its distinction consists in a particular shape of the sleeve, which is very short, to show—what all Swedish women have, in spite of hideous figures otherwise—a perfect hand and arm ; as pretty as

Lady Boringdon's, and without an exception in all ranks.

The dinner was very good, served without plate though, and carved on the side table. A large tureen (*sic*) full of glorious cream, and cartloads of strawberries and raspberries for supper. Hours are so different from London ones, that to be up after twelve is unheard of; balls begin at six, and everybody is stirring proportionately early.

Yesterday we returned from a very pleasant merry party, to see the Castle of Gripsholm. We slept there in that great state prison which has been used as a court sometimes, too. . . . We enjoyed the party a good deal, from the curiosity of it and the good humour of our party, consisting of Mr. Douglas¹ and Lord Balgonie,² who is on his travels in these parts, destitute of the French or Swedish languages. What he will have to recollect I really cannot guess, except dead lions. He says he understands French, but can't bring himself to talk it, and then wonders exceedingly at finding the Swedes inaccessible.

August 6th.—. . . The Opera Concert was worth hearing. Madame de Mainville is the Stockholm Catalani; she has a beautiful, mellow, and powerful voice. We came out from the Opera as the clocks struck nine, and therefore into daylight, which, to be sure, did surprise me not a little. We there saw Prince Oscar, Bernadotte's son,³ a handsome, manly little fellow of thirteen, about whom and his father every Swede we have seen raves; and by their accounts the Crown Prince seems, at least, to possess to an extreme degree all the arts of popularity. He educates his boy in a very manly English way, won't let him speak a word of French, and uses him as his

¹ English Chargé d'Affaires in Stockholm; afterwards became Earl of Morton.

² Afterwards eighth Earl of Leven (1785-1860).

³ Afterwards Oscar I., King of Sweden and Norway, and father of the late King. His father, Charles Bernadotte, was one of Napoleon's Generals, and was chosen Crown Prince of Sweden by the Swedes. At this time he was in command of the combined armies of Northern Germany against Napoleon. He became King in 1818, and died in 1844.

interpreter in addressing the peasants on public occasions. Everybody has some trait to tell of *notre cher petit prince*, and his growth and health are watched with extreme anxiety.

Mme. de Staël is the subject of much conversation and enquiry ; she went over with the *avowed* intention of marrying Albertine, her daughter, to the Duke of Devonshire ; said Albertine, who in London is so modest and shy, was here distinguished only by extreme shrewdness and bold rattling. I suppose her mother instructed her in the manner of adapting herself to English manners out of “Corinne.”¹ . . .

I am always called *Mme. la Comtesse*, and any attempt at reducing myself to my proper rank is quite vain, so I let myself alone in my exalted station ; and likewise have got into all manner of new ways. Being kissed by the ladies every morning and evening, at every parting and meeting, still seems strange enough ; but I shall soon be up to it, I dare say. And as to eating bread and butter just before dinner, and serving the dessert first on the table, and eating fish after half the dinner is over, and all, men and women, rising together as soon as they have eat their fill, and returning in pairs into the drawing-room, I am getting callous to it all. The men not being left behind is very tiresome, I must think. . . . They know a great deal about England, and Papa’s library, the sale of the Boccaccio, and the names of most of the great people in London. Lord Wellington is talked of a great deal more than in London—his family and figure and history are enquired about prodigiously. The ladies get all their clothes from France . . . no manufactures for dress seem to exist in the country. They wear very high hats, with amazing plumes of six or seven large ostrich feathers at the top for the evening ; and I am beginning to think them pretty. Not so their very short, thick waists and dirty teeth. . . .

At one dinner-party Lady Sarah was talking with a Swedish gentleman, and some book was mentioned, which she said she would not read, “car on dit que cela recommande la suicide, et je ne veux pas y penser.”

¹ Albertine married the Duc de Broglie.

To which he replied : " Ah, Madame ! ne craignez rien. Femme aimable, jeune mari, cela ne se tue pas."

To Lady Georgiana Spencer.

STOCKHOLM,

August 12, 1813.

. . . We have just *déménagé*, and have stepped into the cast-off shoes of Lord Balgonie, who is gone to Russia. We were cheated so furiously at the first place we lodged at, that it makes the universal subject of conversation in the first circles, and the Governor is very busy giving us redress, I hope. . . . The Arfwedsons, M. de Rosenstein, and the Chevalier Moreno are still, we think, very amiable and agreeable people. *Du reste*, I cannot say much. Even at this brilliant and beautiful season of the year, and when there is as much *agrément* in the society as possible, from their living each in a pretty villa, and in a very cordial and informal way, we agreed t'other evening in a talkoveriness general, that it begins to grow tiresome from the tone of frivolity and the want of any distinguished manly talents or interesting subject of conversation among them. We are very much struck, too, with the strange monotony of the country about this place; always a pretty lake, well broken by a rocky shore, trimmed with fir woods, mixed here and there with groves of immense oaks and pretty birch; always a clear blue sky; always picturesque cottages. . . .

Mme. la Gouvernante, the Comtesse de Folambe, had a very pretty little daughter of twelve years old, boxed up in a pair of stays with a busque, all bone. Her mother pointed out to me how correctly they copy *l'usage anglais à cet égard*. I could scarcely undeceive her, and make her believe that *ces belles tailles angloises* proceeded from anything but whalebone. . . . Baron Stroganoff, the Russian Minister, has brought a library of 40,000 volumes with him—a sort of *bibliothèque de campagne*—not very portable, one should have thought. His nation is abhorred in this place, quite like the French in London, never talked of but with execration by all sorts of people. . . .

Heaven bless you, my sweet dear Ginny ! Why, tomorrow will be its birthday ! And it will be nineteen

Well, I am sure I can't believe it. Well, God bless it, most seriously and earnestly do I pray, my dearest little, slim, un-Swedish, kind-hearted sisterkin.

STOCKHOLM,
August 16, 1813.

. . . I have just had a tittering bout at being called Madame la Baronne during a whole dialogue. Comtesse I am grown callous to. Not so the very profligate and insulting mistake, most common of all, of addressing your loving friends as M. de Lyttelton and Miladi Sarah Spencer. Now you know, and so does Mr. Allen,¹ that this is not the case by any means; but all our endeavours and those of Mr. Douglas, whenever he can keep his countenance enough to speak of it gravely, have not succeeded in setting M. de Rosenstein, particularly, right upon this point.

On the same day Lady Sarah wrote to her parents to tell them that she and Mr. Lyttelton had formed a plan of going on to Russia from Sweden.

To the Earl and Countess Spencer.

STOCKHOLM,
August 16, 1813.

We thought it best, my dearest Papa and Mama, to tell you of our plan as early as possible, while it is but a plan. I need not, I am sure, say to you what you must feel, that I am very, very sorry for the lengthening of our separation from you. But I must add that I am sure our return after it will be even more delightful than it would be now, that I shall feel more as if I had left you for something really worth acquiring; and I cannot too often assure you, from the bottom of my heart, of my entire and indescribable happiness in my wanderings, as far as it depends (and you know best how very far that is) upon incessant, undeservable, and, if possible, still increasing kindness and attention shown me by him whom you saw me tied to for life five happy months ago. . . .

¹ The clergyman who married them.

Lady Sarah wrote in her diary from Upsala, where they went on August 18:

"Travelled seven long miles Swedish. Pleasant journey, and no mishaps. Upsala too ugly, in a dreary plain—grotesque, not Gothic Cathedral. Vast fuss about us; notice given *à la ronde* to ye professors of our arrival. Most striking thing is Linnæus's tomb—quite perfectly beautiful, by Verzel. . . . Assembled in great professional force after breakfast. Professors Afzelius, Thunberg, Svanberg, and Nordmark; issued forth with 'em first to see first a little unmeaning and most incurious cabinet of bungling toys, called *instruments de physique*, a magic lanthorn, some *lunettes polièdre*, and little show boxes among them, fit for Althorp's cabinet under the stairs at Althorp. Then we went to Thunberg's—a very fine old fellow indeed he is. His cabinet of Japanese curios very entertaining—that of natural ones a hundred miles beneath Bullock's museum. Came home to dine with Afzelius. His conversation good. Enthusiastic about Bernadotte. Account of the universal wish for his election. No canvassing at all. National voice chose him. Enquired from French prisoners of war about all the French marshalls—heard the highest praise of Bernadotte, and chose him on that account. His affability and dignified politeness—his graceful embarrassment in addressing Maximilian de Béthune, straight from Sully! *French master* here. Bernadotte was saying *petits mots* to the circle who were presented to him at this place, and coming to M. de Béthune, and hearing his name, he drew back a few steps and made a low and humble bow, as if he *felt it all*. No blemish in his character yet."

"Osterbey, August 22.—Very pleasant day's journey—only four or five miles Swedish, and no mishaps. This place is pretty and comfortable, and looks more substantial and rich than any I have seen here, surrounded by fine cornfields, heavy crops and wild clover; good stout cottages. Great handsome establishment of Mons. Tamm, Count Uglas's agent. Great copper roofed house with wings to it; many outhouses, great heaps of iron before it, many thriving plantations, many smart Sunday peasants, heavy

forge-hammer going all the time. Everything busy and rich and smug-looking. Great admiration of our carriage, peasants standing all round it. N.B.—Tamm told us young Count Mörner first thought of Bernadotte for King of Sweden, knew him from having been bred under him in the army, went over to him in France to propose it to him, and then came back and canvassed, which brought about his election as well as the nation's voice. Less romantic and more likely, I think.”¹

They went to Danemora and there went down a mine. At Elfkarleby they saw the great falls of the River Dahl, and at Hilstad had “much fun from watching the kisses of many Swedes on parting and meeting at the inn door; meerschaum pipe not preventing, only delaying, the ceremony.”

Diary.

“*Fahlun, August 29.*—Up before six; left Hilstad at eight; very pretty journey; heavenly day and warm. About half-way stopped to dine at an inn, the first in Dalecarlia, I think, and there first observed the costume, singularly picturesque for women. Close cap, often black velvet, lace front trimming, bright-coloured silk handkerchiefs tied round the neck and shoulders, glaring broad-cloth jacket laced down the front, and very large white sleeves. Short, very full broad-cloth petticoat, different colour from jacket; yet different apron; red stockings, thick high-heeled shoes with buckles. The country to-day improved hourly, grew mountainous, prodigious hills, so steep we walked down them often. View widening and extending all ways, over oceans of firs, on to the furthest blue distance, valleys very rich, full of harvest fields, watered by clear, pebbly brooks or beautiful lakes, with pretty villages along the shores. People at inn doors become broad-shouldered, stout, and sturdy-looking. Most extraordinary first sight of Fahlun, spread all over a large valley, bounded by high hills, all dim and dismal with the smoke,² and so strangely lighted up with a

¹ This was the case.

² Presumably from a forest fire.

crimson sunset, it looked like a very pandemonium this evening. Houses blackish with smoke—inn very good indeed. High rooms, look out to the market-place one way, and t'other a strange desolate view out of the town up a hill strewed with great white rocks—heaps strangely large of scoria, quite hills of it. Very dismal and sublime, could hardly leave the window. Quantities of white goats about and very young lambs; an't it an odd time of the year? . . . ”

To the Countess Spencer.

ELFDALEN,
September 3, 1813.
Lat. 61° 20'.

Here is the northern extremity of our peregrination. We spend the day at this place, and I delight in having time and opportunity to write to you from so remote and strange a situation. I beg first of all to mention that the reason for our turning back is, that here ceases all road. Beyond this, the forest never has been entered by a coach or post-chaise of any description, and is only crossed by tracks, just passable for horses, which go on through Nordland into Lapland.

STOCKHOLM,
September 13, 1813.

MY DEAREST GIN, NAN AND CO. (if Co. there be),—To you I this time address myself, to tell of our safe return and re-establishment in our town quarters. Though, alas! I don't know whether you still are a refuge-full, or whether you are dispersed, for after dreaming, thinking, and fidgetting about nothing but the letters I should find here, all the way back from Fahlun, and watching half out of window for Mr. L.'s return from Mr. Douglas's, to whom of course he posted as soon as he had arrived to fetch them, not one! Absolutely not one! The nasty courier chose to mistake one packet for t'other, and brought the newspapers and public dispatches from Götheborg, leaving the private letters to follow. The newspapers to be sure we have read with the greatest interest. What very glorious work seems to be going on everywhere! As to Lord Wellington, he is indeed a God-

send to poor old England, and must at last reduce the upstart, I do think. Surely he never was in so big a scrape in his life. Last year's starvation was a joke to this state of things, as to real effective danger to him, wasn't it? Because all Germany and Prussia and those people were not against him as they are now, all ready to assert their rights. Oh peace, peace! blessed peace! Shall we ever see it? May we begin to hope we shall. The people here are all anxiety about the first movements of the Prince Royal, about whom, by the way, it is quite impossible not to grow enthusiastic a little, if one lives in Sweden and hears much of him. If ever he does anything grossly wrong I shall be quite low. Well now, all these very silly political sentences I write because I have had no letters to answer. . . .

The mourning and the Queen Dowager's corpse, which is lying in state, and an indigestion of Mons. de Engeström's, are the topics we have heard talked of most hitherto. We mourn not, being here for very few days, and professedly on the wing for a western port. . . . The Governor's society at Fahlun, and indeed the sight of the Dalecarlians, have strangely lowered our opinion of the Capital circle, and we are anxious to be off again. . . .

. . . 14th.—I will continue this morning. For last night open burst the door, and in marched Mr. Douglas with the produce of four mails in his hands!!! Do think of the reception they met with, and how papers and letters and books were swept away for Mr. L. and me to fall to. Poor Mr. Douglas was neither seen, heard, nor understood, and so marched out again, with only many warm thanks shouted after him to the door. Then followed a deep silence, each of us studying our treasures hard, for we always read them to ourselves first, and then have a comfortable read and talk-overing together afterwards. . . . To be sure you say all I could wish about our Petersburg plan. It rests wholly on the possibility of our getting a passage from Carlscrona or Ifstad. We shall be there seeking one in little less than a fortnight, and certainly shall take care to do nothing rash or dangerous. We will by no means decide about any doubtful case without consulting good authorities;

then, you know, having done all we can do to provide against dangers, one can do no more. Perfectly unanswerable and strikingly new! Is dear Liz still with you? Poor dear girl, she must have been sadly disappointed at this new delay. I do wish her perfectly happy, as happy as me, so very deeply and sincerely that I have no room for any other thought about it. I hope a great deal from our dear Papa to bear a hand in the business. But what a very strange being is Lord P[embroke]. I have just received a very civil answer from his wife to our application for letters to St. Petersburg in case we want them. She and Count Woronzow have worn out their thumbs most kindly in the service, and sent us loads to be sure. . . .

To the Countess Spencer.

STOCKHOLM,

September 17, 1813.

MY DEAREST MAMMY,—There's Mr. Douglas won't send his courier, nasty man, as we had intended and expected he would to-day. So I was obliged to write you a letter fit for the postmaster, and particular of Sweden, yesterday, and to send it by the post. . . . I shall begin another to keep you all *au courant* during the few, thank Heaven! few remaining Stockholm days, and send them, or leave them with Mr. Douglas to be sent by his next messenger. What he can send said messenger about I guess not, because all Stockholm, to all appearance, seems wholly absorbed in the most frivolous subjects of thinking, talking, and writing; and I can't fancy politics ever stirring here, tho' to be sure they do stir, but only behind the curtain, for the grand Governor is *at you* if you talk any opinion displeasing to His Excellency. This, among other reasons, makes me on the whole agree with young Sawbridge, and think old England best of all, after all.

We dined yesterday at Mons. d'Engeström's again. He seems quite recovered from his indigestion, which I am sure you will rejoice at, and he is now busy providing himself with another by dint of hard eating, a science better understood here than ever I knew it anywhere else. Nothing worth remembering of con-

versation. Chief topics : Swedenborg, Colin Maillard,¹ assignats, and Moreno's water-drinking for general. Mine in particular with Bludolf chiefly : power of Russian nobles to *surpasser la nature dans le grand genre* in gardens ; ease of travelling in Russia ; activity and vigour of all that is done in Russia ; glory of Russia in the last campaign ; courage of Mr. Bludolf in war ; his thoughtlessness of death, and devotion to his duty and his country when in battle ; his wonder at my thinking a battle a scene of confusion. "Mais comment donc ! Vous parlez d'une déroute !"

Poor Mme. d'Engeström, who, like all the other unhappy ladies, is wrapped up and made quite beastly dirty by the coarsest *black baize* gown, was scarcely recovered from the *tiraillements* and *spasmes à la figure* and *vapeurs* into which she had been thrown by the sight of the old Queen Mother's corpse lying in State, which she (Mme. d'E.) was obliged to mount guard by in the morning—a duty belonging to her rank. "Et on m'a fait passer tout près de la tête ! Ah, mon Dieu ! Figurez-vous donc cela ! J'ai fait une scène devant tout le monde ; je n'en reviens pas !" They received us yesterday in their town house, which is very splendid and handsome. But I cannot accustom myself at all to the foreign stiff way of furnishing the rooms : all the chairs against the walls, no little tables or books lying about, no means of breaking the circle. Then in winter, to be sure, they break the chairs of it, which I suppose does as well. Colin Maillard and many other such games are the rage then. One of them is a battle for chairs, both defensively and offensively carried on by *sitting* your neighbour out of his, and then occasionally having to protect your own from invasion. Eighteen chairs were broken at Mme. d'Engeström's parties *only* last winter. It should by all means be suggested in England as an improvement upon blind-man's buff and cushion-pelting.

To-day we dine at home, to our great satisfaction. Visits are paid after dinner chiefly. We get a word from everybody about this great battle at Dresden of August 30, and Blücher's victory of the 26th.² They both look true ; I trust they may have been so.

¹ Blind-man's buff.

² Battle of the Katzbach, when Marshal Macdonald was defeated.



SARAH, LADY LYTTELTON.

From a pencil drawing by Henry Edridge, A.R.A.

To face p. 160.

STOCKHOLM,
September 22.

I had a most delightful visit from Mme. Arfwedson this morning. She told me much detail about Count Fersen's death.¹ Most *grässlich*. She said the Guards all looked on without daring to stop the murder, which was half the morning doing. Horrid details of hair torn by the roots, and dragging and hooking by umbrellas, all about the town! Then she talked of Bernadotte: his arrival, how met by a detachment of partizans offering him the Crown *at once*. "Si c'est là ce dont on me croit capable, il ne me reste plus qu'à me percer de mon épée. Qu'on ne me propose plus ainsi de trahir mon devoir!" Immediate awe and retreat of the malcontents. His entry—how handsome, how tall, how commanding his look, very martial and stern, amid vast huzzas and deep emotion of all ranks. His taking the oath of allegiance. Was placed on a chair of State, dressed in a blue and gold mantle, a coronet on his head, on the lowest step of the empty throne in the chapel. King entered, much bent and weak with age. Bernadotte rose and met and supported him to the throne. Then, when the proclamation was read, declaring him the King's adopted son; his starting up, throwing himself at the old man's feet, and attempting to kiss his hand, but was paternally embraced. When the oath was to be taken, his animated humility in casting away the coronet and swearing allegiance, and then his very grand and imposing manner of rising at once to address and quite humble the nobles in an eloquent speech. His first look at them, *de quoi faire trembler*

¹ Count Axel Fersen, famous for his romantic devotion to Marie Antoinette. In the luckless flight of the Royal Family to Varennes he drove the coach. When the Royal cause was totally lost, he returned to Sweden, where he rose to great power. He was looked upon as the flower of chivalry by all who knew him, but his haughty manner made him unpopular with the people. The sudden death of the Danish Prince, lately elected Heir-Apparent to the Swedish throne in 1810, raised the ready suspicion that Fersen had compassed his death by poison. On the day of the funeral the populace rose in a fury and dragged Count Fersen from his coach, as he drove at the head of the procession, and literally tore him to pieces. In November, 1810, Bernadotte was installed Crown Prince of Sweden.

les plus fiers. Very encouraging to the peasants. Much about his excessive sweetness, his sweet smile, his simplicity of manner in society. *Ma femme*—the Princess Royal, sensible, ugly woman. Comtesse de Lewenhaupt, her *grande maîtresse*, presented her two daughters proudly. “*Votre Altesse Royale sait que mes filles sont princesses de l'empire.*” “*Je sais, Madame, que moi je suis fille de négociant.*”

On September 30, 1813, the travellers went to Carls-crona, in the hope of finding a ship bound for England ; but they failed in this :

To the Countess Spencer.

CARLSCRONAN,
September 30, 1813.

. . . Glorious news there still seems from Germany. Buonaparte actually retreating out of Dresden. Poor Moreau's death, to be sure, is a horrid thing, but everything else, we think in Sweden, quite decisive. I hope to hear of plenty more victories of the Crown Prince's. Do you know he certainly is too fine a character ; I shall make you all admire him as I do when I can tell you all about him. I have got his print, a very like one they say, but nastily drawn.

Mr. Lyte sends you all his best love. He continues to behave himself quite pretty to me, and is really not by any means a brutal husband yet ; Russia may perhaps teach him to use a cudgel or a knout *nous verrons.*

[Undated.]

. . . Well, having written so far of our future hopes, I must say something of our very agreeable recollections gathered during our last trip. We performed our plan of visiting the Comtesse Piper ; but found it quite impossible to leave her after one day, and accordingly spent two whole ones in her great house. It is a fine-looking, very spacious mansion, built at the top of a very high rock overgrown with beautiful large trees. Its great size, and style of building, round a court, and in so lordly a situation, make it extremely well worth seeing, even if its inhabitants were less

so. But it is very difficult to do them justice. The Countess,¹ whom I had expected to find an old belle, painted and *cimaguéed* all over, and justifying all the stories that are told about her here, by one party of people (which stories accuse her of nothing less than *poisoning*), we found her, instead of that, to be certainly, without any exception, the most fascinating woman as to looks and manner that one can imagine. She is old, and professes it openly; shows her white hair, and dresses in a very becoming costume *de vieille*. But her beauty is very striking still; the extreme clearness of her complexion, and the sweet expression of her eyes, and regularity of her features, make her face delightful to look at. Then she has so gentle and so playful, and so dignified a manner all together, and is so totally without pretensions of every kind, that I am sure it is quite impossible not to be quite captivated by her. She received us with extreme kindness, and I am sure I would give a great deal to have staid a few weeks at Löfstad. The rest of the company there were her two sons, and the wife and *belle-mère* of the eldest, and the Duc de Pienne. As to him, he is exactly in look a French and lean Lord Essex, just as fidgetty and trickish, and exceedingly entertaining, from incessant spirits and excellent French *ton*, putting everybody as much at their ease as possible, and *amusant parceque toujours amusé*. He is, I think, twenty years younger than the Comtesse, and is living there with her and her sons, waiting very patiently for the restoration of *mon maître* to the French throne, and of *trois cent mille livres de rente* to his pocket; inventing *petits jeux*, and dancing all his souvenirs of English country-dances up and down the room. The order of the house is altogether, I dare say, very French—everybody doing just what they liked: playing at billiards, singing, walking, going up to one's own *appartement* if one chose, and working *au grand métier de la Comtesse*, who is making *un meuble charmant*, not unassisted by the Duc de P. But the passion of all the family is music; and to be sure it is the most delicious music. Great heaps of duets and trios by all

¹ Countess Piper was sister to Count Fersen. She was also accused of having poisoned the Danish Prince, and was thrown into prison at the time of her brother's death.

the best Italian composers are laying about, and they are sung in the very truest Italian style by the Comtesse Axel Piper, her husband, and le Comte Charles, the youngest son. The two men have glorious voices, and none of them sing the least out of tune ; and they begin quite as if they could not help it, in parts, accompanied by a guitar or a pianoforte, and go on thro' the evening if one chuses, in the most delightful way. It was so extremely great a pleasure to me the first evening, it quite made me tremble to hear them ; such a surprize as it was, too ; when I had made up my mind to some horrid squalling, upon the Duc de P. saying that, “Il faut absolument *dénoncer à Miladi les musiciens qui se trouvent ici,*” and leading the way with a French cadence into the music room. . . . (The rest of this letter is lost.)

Lady Sarah and her husband returned to Stockholm to prepare for their travels in Russia.

STOCKHOLM,
October 11, 1813.

. . . As to finances, out of the money with which Mr. L. supplied himself for the Swedish tour, that is, to last from July to the middle of September, we have, after all expenses paid, 250 pounds sterling left untouched now. This utterly surprising fact must be explained by mentioning that £3,000 a year is a very large property in this country, and that £5,000 a year enables a man to have a chateau in every province, as many equipages as he can wish for, and even to purchase an English post-chaise, and a pianoforte of Broadwood's ; in short, to be the Duke of Norfolk, and save money besides. At Petersburg this is not the case ; indeed, they say it is as nearly as dear to live there as in London. . . .

To Lady Georgiana Spencer.

STOCKHOLM,
October 15, 1813.

. . . It is a sad plague, this Swedish curiosity. Not only does it thwart one so in writing letters, from making one quite certain that they will be opened, but

it is a real nuisance in other respects. In walking the streets still, in spite of fashionable dress, and perfectly quiet and stupid demeanour, I am really stared at now, till Mr. L. is ready to knock down two or three *badeaux* a day on an average ; and though the want of a *trottoir* and necessity of picking my way through the mud, keeps me from seeing the people, I always know when we meet one, by a sort of darting forward of my knight, and a low grumble of “Impudent scoundrel ! he deserves a good thrashing !” and all for stopping to stare quite *bouche béante* at your poor sister who has not *poussé* a second head or an eleventh finger since you saw her, to make her a natural curiosity. . . .

. . . The concert we went to after (I hope) the last dinner at Count d'Engeström's. Nothing certainly ever equalled their civility to us, except our ingratitude in still thinking those dinners very dull, in spite of hospitable reception and very kind treatment. This last dinner was all full dressed in gala mourning quite curious to see, for the men are forced, whatever be their figure or age, to appear in tight Spanish jacket and *inferior* dress and Spanish flowing cloaks, slashed sleeves ; quite Spanish, which is sometimes rather comical on a Swede. And the women in black gowns of baize, white tops to the sleeves, white *collets montés*, and an enormous black veil with a sharp peak of black crape on the forehead, down to the nose. We proceeded, when the dinner-party broke up, to the concert, where we spent near two hours ; and then returned home, racked to death, not by a glimmering of daylight—no, Lady Georgiana!—it being then just half-past eight of that very evening. Now blush when you remember your morning returns from London parties! . . . God bless you, dearest Gin ! Farewell from Sweden ! Going, going, going a step further ! To Russia ! How very strange ! . . .

CHAPTER VII

1813-1814

ON October 20 Mr. and Lady Sarah Lyttelton sailed from Stockholm for Russia. From St. Petersburg they returned home, in the following year, through Germany, as peace was declared in March, 1814, and the road was open to tourists.

Diary.

October 20, 1813.

Mr. Douglas put us on board and then took leave and returned, rather drearily, to the magnificent city, which was lording it over the harbour with all its spires and pinnacles and palaces lighted up by the last rays of the sun. Such was our last long but not lingering look at Stockholm! Good-bye to it!

They sailed in a small ship called a "sumpf." Lady Sarah wrote in her diary that the sumpf was better than the *Leveret*, "cabin stinkless, but deck trunk-shaped and difficult to walk."

They had a good four days' journey to Abo in Finland. Lady Sarah sat in her travelling carriage on deck during the day. The last day they nearly capsized from the mainsail not being shifted in time, and coming up the Abo River in the dark, ran foul of another sumpf, but nevertheless they arrived safely, and landed on Russian soil October 24.

*Diary.*HAXBÖLE,
October 29, 1813.

"Snug and happy because both quite well, but prospect bad enough. Roads infamous. Dickey has broken down once; may again tho' well mended. Small carriage in no good repair, and not half-way to Petersburg. Winter looks very near and dismal. Hitherto the inns bad here. Mem., the inn at Bjorkby, where we found Mr. Baillie and Mr. Knudzen, his Norwegian ally, both going to bed in the only apartment. Dark night, bad roads, impossibility of getting on—therefore dilemma. But gallantry of Messrs. Baillie and Knudzen. They contract themselves into one room and leave us place enough. Poor Rowland obliged to sleep in family bedroom of host and hostess, with them, their children, and a large watchdog round."

They proceeded with only one further mishap.

. . . "Yesterday, by the way, we were stopped by horses refusing resolutely to complete the ascent of a rough, frozen steep hill; . . . almost hopeless for a quarter of an hour; no roaring, whipping or entreating could get the horses to budge. I walked on to the top of the hill; Monsieur helped to urge the horses. At last compelled to take them off; drive the carriage backwards to the foot of the hill, and then having put six horses on to it and reinforced by a most timely little mob of droski drivers who arrived full speed, Heaven knows why, just at that minute, carried the hill by storm, Wilson on the box, mob halloaing all round, and then proceeded, after taking breath and paying assistant Fins for their roaring. The road to-day was often thro' fine winter scenery. Very cold, icicles 2 feet long, skaters, furs and pale sun, short days, all like English December."

They arrived at St. Petersburg on Friday, November 5, a fortnight and a day after leaving Stockholm. On their way there they had heard rumours that Napoleon's army had been destroyed in Germany, but they did not believe it till coming at night within sight

of St. Petersburg, they saw it illuminated from one end to the other. The Battle of Leipsic had been fought on October 18.

To the Countess Spencer.

ST. PETERSBURG,
November 10, 1813.

. . . Lord Walpole¹ brought in a bundle of papers last night to us, and quite made us thrill all over, and then it was nothing but the *Conservateur Impartial*, the Petersburg newspaper, and a letter from Count Woronzow about our presentation. It begins in a manner to-night, for we are to go to be introduced in form to the Comtesse Litta, Grande Maitresse or something of that sort to the Empress. She is to direct my dress, and the degree of mourning we are to wear, for the odious old Queen of Sweden's memory pursues us here. And then, dressed in a very long black gown, but no hoop, and Mr. L. in uniform, we shall enter that great magnificent palace, just opposite, on Sunday morning, and kiss the hands of the two Empresses ; after that, light as feathers to be sure, we may send out our letters of recommendation, and get into society, which is exceedingly easy, and I think will turn out very entertaining. . . . We have made a very useful discovery, that in the month of January or so it would be perfectly easy and pleasant to go on a sledge in a warm carriage to Moscow in three days, and that when there, we should find a beautiful and very curious remnant of a town, and some six or seven very pleasant old noble families of real Russians, well worth knowing, and that after spending a month there nothing can be easier than a progress home through Germany, the first part of it on a sledge. This is, of course, most conditional, depending wholly on the state of Germany, and the chance of it is built on the probable effects of the Battle of Leipsic, which must surely drive the war quite home to France, at least. . . . All we have seen of this town really answers almost entirely the expectations we formed from our first arrival in the midst of the illumination

¹ Afterwards second Earl of Orford, English Chargé d'Affaires in the absence of Lord Cathcart, the Ambassador.

night. It is vast and clean and grand beyond description, and the furniture of the streets, consisting of carriages and pretty horses driving, very quick, with the servants in strange picturesque fur caps and cloaks, and numbers of figures on foot or on horseback, in every variety of half-Asiatic costume, with long beards and no two alike in dress, and the fine breadth of the river, and great space round every public building, makes it a most delightful scene to *gape-see* at. But we are so lucky as to be able still to take our walks, and drive about, the weather is so wonderfully mild; fine hunting weather. . . .

November 11th.—Well, our visit to the Countess Litta is over happily. We issued forth last night in our carriage, which I shall describe, as it is like all others here, as to attelage I mean, and very odd. It is a Petersburg one, our own post-chaise being much too valuable to rattle it about the rough pavement for three months. The carriage itself is a shabby chariot; a *laquais de place* stands behind, who can talk German. A coachman in a rough brown dress with a girdle, something like a Persian's as to shape, and a most strange cap as to fur and velvet. He drives a pair of very pretty swift horses, ahead of which pair, but at a vast distance, far enough to admit of a horse between, is another pair driven by a postillion, so that in turning the corners of streets, the leaders of a carriage arrive long before the carriage is at all seen. Crane necks are universal, and the rapidity and skill with which the Russians drive, threading the needle among all these long sets of horses, running races with everybody they meet, and turning quite short round at a moment's warning, is very surprising. Many of the coach-horses are cream-coloured or piebald; and look excessively pretty; all the carriages are scrubby and nasty.

The Comtesse Litta we found a great fat woman sitting in a fine room, dressed in a cambric gown and great mob cap, very dowdy, but with a most splendid scarlet shawl of immense price, that is to say 200 pounds sterling, for they make nothing of giving that for shawls. Some other women were playing at cards at a table, and some men with heads like this [a sketch] were lounging, looking very dirty, and sadly dull,

about the room. We stayed a very little while, and received directions about Sunday. I am to be presented by the same Mme. de Litta, alone; Mr. L. at another hour, by M. de Narychkin. I think somehow more than half my fright is over now I know I am to go by myself. I think a friend on such an occasion makes matters much worse. The Empress-Mother I have heard nothing about yet. The *régante*¹ is a very delightful, virtuous young woman, very wretched, having lost her children, and being ill-used by her husband. To be sure she does live in a magnificent palace enough, if that was a cure for care.

13th.—Lord Walpole for ever! Why, he is the phœnix of *chargés*. Is he not going to send off another courier to-morrow, bless his little soul! And so off with my letter, which really threatened by its vast size to play some trick, like the owner of the Castle of Otranto, if it had lived and swelled much longer. Our presentation is to-morrow. To be sure I wish I could have written you word of how I fell into and through my own train, and then knocked the Empress down during the operation, which is to consist of a theatrical attempt on my part to kiss H.M.'s hand, and a complicated movement on hers to repel and then embrace me.

Our affairs go on very swimmingly; . . . we have already received visits of ceremony or messages or cards from many a hard-named Russian, and one real visit from the Princess Serge Galitzin to-day, whom Lord Granville Leveson² recommended us to. She is a woman about thirty, and has been most strikingly handsome, with wonderfully fine black eyes, coal-black hair, and a strangely powerful and sweet expression of countenance. Her conversation was very superior to any we have heard from foreign ladies yet; in admirable French, and both lively and sensible. She is said to be perfectly virtuous. Lord G. *soupira en vain pour trois ans*, they say, and that, you know, sets her powers of resistance amazingly high. She leads a strange life: goes to bed at three in the morning, and stays in it twelve or thirteen hours, and carries

¹ She was a Princess of Baden, and wife of the Czar Alexander I.

² Afterwards first Earl Granville. He had been Ambassador in Petersburg for three years.

her head and wears her shawl in a way of her own, which has got her the reputation of being an eccentric genius. She betrayed no eccentricity whatever during our long visit to-day ; what may come I don't know.

Everybody here is in great uneasiness about their military relations, as, owing to the barbarous neglect of sending an immediate return, or, indeed, any official one at all, they are obliged to depend on private, and often very tardy, accounts of the losses after every battle, and none have yet arrived since that of Leipsic. We can go to regular English Church here, which is an extremely great comfort ; and, moreover, it is as warm as any drawing-room. . . . This must be a circular, for to-morrow after presentation I must go and visit all the ladies of the Court, and shall not have a minute's time. Please the pigs that Mme. Louise don't fail to bring me my robe à queue en levantine noire garnie de ruches de pequinettes, and that the hairdresser does but come in time to twist my hair up in the last Russian fashion, I shall do very well comparatively. Think of a plain silk gown to go to Court and patent net trimmings ! and that's quite the right thing too. . . . This you'll please to observe is in fact the 1st of November. In fact, I say, for we Russians call it so, and the fame of our unerring veracity is—you well know ! However, I hanker after the English blunder, and must date the 13th new style.

ST. PETERSBURG,
November 20, 1813.

. . . Now, to return to this place, I have a great deal to say to you about my doings here. It shall come out by degrees. I must begin by describing the weather, which is looked upon, not only by us, but by the Russians, as nearly miraculous. After such frost as we had in Finland a month ago, and though it is now the end of November, we are living in an ugly caricature of summer : incessant daily warm rains, a sky always darkened by clouds, and the ground entirely consisting of slop and mud ; so hot that we are obliged to open the windows, and are half afraid of stove and fur. And this every day and all day long. It is like a very warm English November, but it is twelve years since the same thing has occurred here. Last year

the French army was already freezing to death at this season.

I have already prosperously completed my payment of the toll which almost all foreigners pay on arriving here ; it is a very trifling complaint, and I am now entirely recovered. I patched myself up one day to be presented, and came away quite blinded with splendour. The palace is magnificent, beyond even what its outside led me to expect. The vast size of the rooms, their immense number, the quantity of attendants, the fine solemn pomp of the High Mass of the Greek Church, performed by priests dressed in cloth of gold, with golden censors, book bindings, and taper stands, all in a perfumed mist of incense within the chapel, while very fine voices sang chaunts, and though last, not least, the sight of the Empress herself, are really like a dream. It was not a regular Court day, so that there was nobody there but the usual attendants and officers of State, and four ladies and two gentlemen besides ourselves to be presented. We stood in a row in one of the rooms, and after the entry and procession of the whole Court, who ranged themselves opposite, in came the Empress-Mother,¹ a woman of fifty-five, with a fine large figure and a very cheerful blooming countenance, dressed in plain mourning, and covered—her head, neck, arms—with long rows of enormous pearls. She gave her hand to kiss to each of the two women presented, then embraced them, and said a *petit mot*. When she came to me, as I had seen two Countesses perform, I made no blunder luckily, nor even called Her Majesty Madame la Comtesse, though I was much inclined so to do. She vouchsafed to talk to me a very long time—I dare say ten minutes—asked me the usual questions, and then began talking about you, Papa, about your *carrière si brillante et si belle*, and your being now so fond of the country ; and no wonder in England, où les châteaux ont tant d'agréments. And, in short, I might, if I was not the most humble of all courtiers, boast of a very great favour ; ahem ! Well, then off she walked, and we proceeded to the antechamber of the chapel to wait till Mass was over for the second presentation to the young Empress.

¹ She was a Princess of Würtemberg, widow of the mad Czar Paul.

All this time Mr. Lyte was performing elsewhere ; he began with the *régante*. The ceremony was the same with her ; but she is so beautiful ! Not her face, because she is very red—of late only ; but her figure I think the very prettiest I ever saw, even in England. She came into the room with the lightest and most graceful step ; she is tall, *élancée*, with the prettiest small head placed beautifully on her shoulders, and nothing can be more graceful than her manner. She is only rather too modest, shrinking from everything like ostentation ; she won't suffer any woman to kiss her hand, but always embraces quite cordially. A few years ago her features show how extremely handsome she must have been. There was a Grande Duchesse and her *gouvernante* to be presented to besides, and the two Princes of the blood royal, *chez qui se faire écrire*, and as they all live at about three miles distant from each other, through halls, saloons, corridors, presence chambers innumerable did we march, till our chaperon, the Princess Prossorowsky, an old rouged lady, was obliged to smell at her bottle of eau-de-Cologne, and most loudly to lament the duties of her high office. The Empress has been pleased to say Monsieur Lyte is the most *aimable* Englishman she has seen this great while, and that his talking French so well put her much at her ease. I likes a bit of praise of 'im, though it is from an Empress and through a courtier that I get it. Since that memorable day he has been paying many visits ; I have been very frequently and civilly visited, but I have not yet been out at night, it is such nasty weather. To-morrow I shall make my *début* again by going to church, and then the odious but necessary round of the ladies of honour, who must be visited in full dress. Too tiresome to be sure. After that I shall be at liberty, and may go about as I like. The fashion is all for general invitations. The Countess Stroganoff, the Countess Irene Woronzow, Madame de Colombi, Princesses Galitzin (there are two), and the Duchess de Serra Capriola, are each of them at home two or three times a week, from about nine to ten till any hour ; some begin sooner. And they have all been so good as to tell me to go there whenever we chuse, thanks to Lady Pembroke's and Count Woronzow's

letters and Lord Granville's. . . . The Imperial hounds killed seven sheep t'other day. Shew me such a feat performed by the Pytchley! They never hunt but on Sundays. . . .

ST. PETERSBURG,

November 29, 1813.

. . . Scene: St. Petersburg. Great room at the Hotel de l'Europe; round the table, before a sofa covered with litter; hour, three afternoon; very dark. S. L. and Monsieur Lyte—she sitting elbows on table, he *ventilating* the room diagonally. Enter by a great double door Lord Walpole; usual salutations. Lord W.: "I am going to send a courier off—a trusty fellow—he will soon be in England; he goes this week. You shall have twenty-four hours' notice; he'll take anything."

S. L.: "He won't read my letters?"

Lord W. (somewhat diplomatically): "Read your letters! Oh dear, no! to be sure. I tell you he is a trusty fellow; he goes on business of—business of some little—in short, I can depend on him."

So if he can depend on him, so can I to be sure, or poor England's concerns are in weak hands. . . . A few symptoms of winter, properly so called, have begun at last to hover about us, such as continual fine snow falling, flakes of ice beginning to appear on the canal opposite, horses slipping about on the pavement, and a wholesome, clear, bracing feel in the air, making one many degrees better and healthier than one was. . . .

The general of what little society I have seen is, I think, formal and circular when it is numerous; men and women always in two distant and unjoinable squadrons at the end of the room. This is a new fashion, and fresh from Paris; and as the women so secluded are placed in an unmovable form, it is rather apt to wax dull. Small parties are, however, infinitely more agreeable than large ones are dull, and much more agreeable than the common run of English society, from the want of all affectation among women, and the general talkativeness and civility among men. I can't conceive anything more easy and cheerful than these small parties; but I have seen so little yet, that I am half ashamed at having said so much. We

are most civilly treated by everybody, that is all I know; and we are very well and very happy, that is all I meant to say.

From Lady Sarah's Diary.

"*St. Petersburg, December 5.*—Here we are, in a lodging over three shops in Prospective Newsky. Went yesterday after dinner to Mme. Palianski's and sat agreeably with her and her sister for an hour. No making her understand how English Governments survive the print-shop windows in London. Told her of the Prince of Hessenstein's visit to Mr. Fox when Minister, and of his being desired by Mr. F. to lounge over some caricatures till he was at leisure to attend to him, Mr. Fox himself being the principal figure in each. Mme. Paliansky to this moment in a hopeless puzzle about it. Said lady in a very dirty white gown, ditto fingers, ditto cap; very agreeable, tho'. Then to the Countess Woronzow's. . . . The Countess cordial, rather insipid. Mme. Demidoff, affected young lady, frightful! True Rush—sallow, black teeth, dead eyes, goodish figure. . . . Princess Serge Galitzin came in as we were going out, looking very pretty in a huge black and pink gypsey hat and striped *cotton* gown, with a shawl *en drapeau*. Everybody else dressed for evening work."

"*7th.*—Sunday night to Mme. Lounine's concert—very hot and brilliant. Mme. Narychkin *la belle*—face like the Apollo of Belvedere, exceedingly beautiful, modest manner; very plain, decent dress.¹ Prince Kourakin, large head, fat figure like an elephant. Dressed in a blue uniform embroidered with gold, two stars of fine diamonds, an order hanging to his neck of large garnets and diamonds; epaulette of six rows of fine pearls hanging all over his shoulder, festooned up with a diamond brooch. Too dazzling to look at in bright light. . . . Princess Serge Galitzin arrived at twelve o'clock; very beautiful, quite eclipsed them all—most beautiful! Crown on her head; a little rouge on; fine gown and shawl. Men a parcel of figures! Senator

¹ Mme. Narychkin was famous for her influence over the Emperor Alexander.

Abreskoff—some such name—with a wig like a very thick black broom, all *ébouriffée*. M. Demidoff, like a gnu, head in bosom. . . . We came away before supper, past one."

"December 9.—Went after dinner to Princess Boris Galitzin. Delightful woman, sitting *en malade* with a small party making lint for the military hospitals. Most agreeable people; the Duc de Polignac and his old sister—beautiful French, excellent *ton*. Spent an hour very pleasantly indeed there. Came home and were snug, reading and abusing Wieland till bed-time."

To the Countess Spencer.

December 12, 1813.

. . . What a time this is of great events! What would I give to know what has happened by this time, and whether the war is not at last really and truly rather on its last legs! Whether it is from living where little else is talked of now but general politics, or from the thing being really so, I can't tell; but it seems to me quite sublime to think of such an union of great nations marching together for so very just and glorious an object. The Russians, to be sure, do bestow a sufficient load of flattery upon their autocrat about it. He is talked about quite as if he was far above his namesake of old, and called the deliverer of the world, with as bold a *bonne foi* as if Lord Wellington and Blucher and Bernadotte had done nothing but obey his orders! There stands his bust opposite me; I declare his soft face makes me sick, out of mere perverseness from hearing him so praised. "Et il aurait pu être tout aussi grand, tout aussi heroique, et cependant ne pas posséder en même temps tous les avantages extérieures. Mais que ce soit aussi le plus bel homme de son empire! absolument le plus beau." Thus said a lady to us t'other day. I might have told her, "Parmi les aveugles"; for, to be sure, such frights as the men who are still here I never did see. I fancy they must have chosen out all who were not hideous to send them to the army.

We have just taken a long walk—a very entertaining thing, I need not tell you, in so new a world. Mr. L.,

in a coat lined with fur and a wadded hat, and I in fur boots, double-wadded silk capôte, four doubles of shawl over that, besides fur gloves, find ourselves fully protected against 7 degrees of Réaumur, even with a sharpish wind, which was to-day's weather. The sun shines, and the air is absolutely life and delight to me. The streets are full of sledges going like lightening, most of them with a pair of horses with magnificent long tails and manes. One of the two horses is trained like a *manège* horse, and holds his pretty head down with a most graceful affectation, waving his long mane, and often curveting most comically ; he is called *le furieux*, and much pains are taken to have him of pretty piebald colours. The sledges themselves are not as gaudy as I had expected to see them, but they are very often handsome, and people like mountains of fur, with rosy faces all pinched and happy with their dear frost, look so comfortable in them, I quite long for my first expedition, which is to take place the next fine day. All these sledges, and a number of carriages besides, gliding about most gaily with scarcely any noise upon the snow, make the streets extremely cheerful. Then the Neva looks quite strange ; it is just now frozen over, and the appearance is that of a great plain covered with ruins of ice. The great sheets of ice that float down first are driven against each other, and lie in confusion half covered with snow till a really heavy fall takes place, and then it will be smooth, and driven over just like any street. That is not, I perceive, by any means a clear description, but *cuff faire* ? It is a vastly difficult subject. All the *beau monde* does not walk ; many are the ladies who maintain that the said exercise is very pernicious. They accordingly almost lose the use of their legs ; and t'other day, as I was going about shopping with Mme. Palianski, I observed the footman not only helped her out of carriage, but followed her upstairs, holding her under both elbows as she lounged up. I was making my progress a little more independently, and as soon as she perceived this, " Mais comment donc ! vous ne vous faites pas soutenir ! vous montez toute seule comme cela !" she exclaimed, as if she had found out I had three legs ; and this is a lively, healthy little woman of thirty-five !

. . . You will observe that we are quite *en ménage* now, having an apartment containing a kitchen, and, moreover, a kitchenmaid—a German kitchenmaid, by the way; and that marvellous Sieur Roberts having turned out as well able to superintend said matters, and to send up a very nice English dinner, as he was able to drive the *lilla vagn*. . . . Wednesday we dine at Count Romanzoff's—full-dressed, long-trained, uniformed, very stately, nasty great dinner! Mem., I go to-morrow morning to buy me a new gown for it. Of white crape I think it shall be—yes, white crape, four rubles a yard; cheap enough, and *toujours distinguée*, Madame Louise says. . . . This burst of dissipation is by no means to last, and is only borne by us to pay off debts and to ensure a few perfectly quiet days after it. We are always at home before twelve at night, and our home is most comfortable. . . . Hours here are less bad than London, but not good. We go often to three places of a night, and contrive to keep to our Cinderella rule, but one may stay out till three in the morning. The parties are all very small, and in large rooms; some of them very pleasant. No one person very agreeable, perhaps, but all sufficiently so, and often greater ease and greater talk than in England. . . . Mons. Lite sends all manner of kind messages of affectionate and dutiful tendency. . . . He performs occasionally some very curious capers about the suite of rooms, and I expect will carry off the Emperor or Empress from their pedestals and get knouted; otherwise he behaves very well.

Diary.

"December 17.—A week of dinners daily! Oh!!! This morning, soon after breakfast, went and walked to the very end of the English Quay; 12½ degrees of frost. . . . Disagreeable work walking till near over. At first, sundry pains in chest with puffing in and out frozen air; and in hands, spite of fur gloves. Then tingling cheeks, smarting ears, cured by eau-de-Cologne. Then frequent slippings, ditto blowings of nose, and pocket-handkerchief instantly freezing in hand. At last, on turning from the wind (N.B.—*Always keep home under your lee*), it becomes tolerable,

having, by the way, looked very pretty all the time—snow covered with diamond-dust, columns and spires in the very furthest distance glittering with frost, all sky very blue and very sun dazzling. . . .”

“December 21.—Spent all our dinner week, thank Heaven! Was at a ball at the Duke of Serra Capriola’s Saturday; very pretty, fresh, clean-looking dresses; gay rooms, many handsome women. I danced three polonaises—one with Bardaxi, one with Serra Capriola the old, and one with Narychkin *le singe*. Liked it. . . . Mr. L. took his first German lesson yesterday. I busy drawing the room. Head full, partly of vanishing points, horizontal lines, planes and angles; partly of journey to Moscow; partly of Mme. Louise’s new stays for making me a *dos antique*, her abusing my shoulders for being so very flat and straight, Mama! Partly, and chiefly, of 21st December, 1812—Mr. L.’s landing at Althorp, to wit—a year ago!”

“December 27.—After writing yesterday, much pestered by many visits . . . all one after the other, utterly knocked me up. Admiral Tschitchagoff¹ very shrewd, keen, quick man, *frondeur*. I suppose tells truth. Said frost did all last year; skill nothing. French decidedly victorious as far as Moscow, which place Koutousoff pledged ‘his white hair’ to defend to the last. Did he defend it? If it had been intended to sacrifice it, why not give notice to the inhabitants? Why not empty the town? Why leave it full of the most useful ammunition? Why not take the Kaluga position before the French went to Moscow, which must have stopped them? Le grand mérite! After he had evacuated the capital, to begin proclaiming that ‘Moscow n’est pas la Russie.’ N.B.—Said proclamation has always been stated to us as having been written *avant coup* as a *projet* for the sacrifice of Moscow, not as an apology, as it now turns out to have been. Borodino a signal defeat of the Russians. Koutousoff’s parallel march nonsense; he kept a hundred versts behind the French, and therefore they were not destroyed as they [might] have been at the Beresina. Koutousoff a sleepy old man, up only six

¹ He commanded the Southern Army in 1812, and was blamed for not destroying the whole French Army at the passage of the Beresina in the retreat from Moscow, 1812.

hours in the twenty-four ; always unsuccessful before and unskilful amidst all manner of advantages last year. Russian people very brave fighters always. Odd fact of no common people ever going to the theatre. ‘C'est au dessus d'eux.’ Altogether a collection of very curious facts.”

“January 2, 1814.—Very curious day ; thermometer 21 degrees of cold, Réaumur ; very high wind, and snow falling as fine as dust. Dark sky ; few people about ; those few mostly mujics, furred up to the eyes ; soldiers wrapping their faces in a bit of their coat skirt ; people in sledges, not a bit of face to be seen ; horses seem stiff ; nobody upright ; all looks strange and dreadful. Gutters spouting draperies of ice instead of icicles. Obliged to burn lamps in this room, and do all we can by chaufferette and valve in reserve to keep ourselves up to 13 degrees of heat. Dr. Crichton won’t let me try a sledge nor stir out. Icelandic moss has cured me in a great degree very nearly ; quite stout now. Mons. Lyte very stout.”

To the Countess Spencer.

ST. PETERSBURG,
December 22, O.S.,
January 3, N.S.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—Although this cannot be a long or a good for anything letter, I must write it and send it, just to wish you a happy new year in due season. . . . Winter has set in furiously here at last. There have been 25 degrees of cold, Réaumur, which I think are more than 20 degrees of Fahrenheit below nought. Carriage wheels creak and whistle on the streets in a way quite inconceivable, unless one has tried it, like a knife on a plate ; from the excessive hardness and smoothness of the surface I believe. Mr. L. goes out every day on foot and in a sledge. I have given it up since the cold has been so very severe, except in a close carriage. This is a sad, dry letter ; but I thought it better than none at all, just as a sign of unfrozen life to send you part—oh, so very small a part—of my good wishes. Well, so here we are in 1814 ; and please Heaven before it is over, some months before, I trust

I shall see you all again. That is certainly enough to make the new date look quite beautiful to me. . . .

Diary.

"January 4.—This morning thermometer exhibited 26 degrees of cold. Sun very bright, sky clear, no wind. At noon I seized by an unhappy fit of curiosity. Proceeded to tease and wheedle Monsieur Lyte till permitted to disobey the doctors and walk. Ever to be remembered expedition to the Neva. Dress, a quadruple shawl and fur shuba over it. Fur boots, wadded velvet bonnet. Set out; liked it well till we reached the boulevards. Then Mr. L.'s nose froze at the point, turned white. I pantingly announced it to him. He cured it with snow. We proceed. All the view the colour like bright cream; rather hazy, but very sparkling and still. Awful degree of frost; very striking. I however soon unable to meditate, for at sight of Neva, where reigned a frost of 30 degrees, I was taken with faintness, inclining me strongly to lie down; was very near begging Mr. L. to let me so to do! Very odd measure, certainly. Then for one instant had great pain in feet and hands. But these symptoms directly gave way to a general insensibility, far from agreeable. Remember only after that being much frightened, complaining in a feeble whimper and trying in vain to feel in my fingers, pinching and biting hard. They persisted in being like large bunches of very thick hard icicles put into my hand. Mr. L. hurrying me on all the time. At last making a very unwise petition to be rubbed with snow, not knowing or understanding anything, was landed in the snug shop of Feuillette, Patissier. There in a deplorable plight, laid almost fainting on sofa; good deal swelled, lace obliged to be cut, ditto bootlace, wristbands loosened, then recovered my hands, through an absolute agony of pain, made me almost cry. Then left as weak as if I had been ill, all the time on a sofa in an upper room of Mme. Feuillette; her kindness, giving me *des petits bouillons légers*, and wrapping me up and settling me on cushions. Mr. L. went to fetch Dr. Crichton. I scolded by doctor, but recommended to drink brandy

and water; got quite warm thro' and thro'; sent home, ate a good dinner, and quite snug now, only not absolutely strong yet."

"*St. Petersburg, January 23, 1814.*—Last night I did go out, and was very much delighted by seeing a little Russian play, or opera, extremely well acted, sung and danced, in a room, by Russians. The music was remarkably pretty; the dancing beautiful; Cossack dances which are so manly and martial and gay, they are quite cheering to look at. The national costume is very pretty; they wear silver, or rather tin heels to their boots, which they keep knocking together, making a measured little noise like castanets, and quite as lively. One of the actresses spoke in the dialect of Ukraine, which is really as soft as Italian. . . .

"The winter continues of a frightful severity; everybody agrees in thinking it unexampled for the last thirty years. . . . It makes me quite silly about castle building, or rather summer fancying, and I actually caught myself t'other day reading *de préférence* in the *bibliothèque portative*, some dry articles about the science of botany, merely for the pleasure of filling my head with notions of tulips and hyacinths and roses. . . ."

In February Lady Sarah caught typhus fever. On her recovery, Mr. Lyttelton started on a ten days' trip to Moscow.

To Lady Georgina Spencer.

ST. PETERSBURG,
March 20, 1814.

. . . Two or three women — Mme. Bacconin [Bakunin ?], Mmes. Palianski, Novossiltzoff—come to me perpetually. . . . I ought not in enumerating little attentions to omit those of the Empress, who was so gracious as to send a German gentleman in full dress, with paste buttons and a prodigiously powdered head, almost daily to Mr. L. to make enquiry about me, besides quite oppressing me with jellies and things utterly impossible and unfit for me to eat.

I was going, just before I was taken ill, to write you

a long history of how we went to see a sort of St. Cyr of her establishing; and how we saw two or three hundred young ladies, each one more frightful than the last, receiving certainly a very excellent education, in a magnificent establishment, all under the Empress's own direction and inspection; and how, while we were in perfect ease and happiness admiring and enquiring, appeared by a plot laid on purpose to surprize us the Empress herself, with whom we had then to parade about and make small talk for an hour or two longer. She is a very charitable good sort of woman, spends her whole time in attending to the hospitals and institutions which are numerous here, and into every detail of which she looks herself.

My dear Gin, to make you regret that you have not got your fortune to make here, I send you the portraits of some beaux; or if you please I send them to Althorp to improve his headdress by. No. 1 is M. Narychkin, *grand veneur*; usually known in polite company by the name of *le mari, par préférence*, being husband to the Lady Hertford of this land. The head is scarcely curled enough in my drawing; it is truly wonderful. . . . All the heads are on these models except a few Anglomanes. . . .

To the Countess Spencer.

ST. PETERSBURG,

March 25, 1814.

MY DEAREST MAMA,—This is, I verily believe, my last bulletin, I mean of my late fever, for I think I can safely and truly assure you that I have no remains of it whatever. . . . Besides all this I am, in spite of the most odious weather and utter impossibility of going out, as happy as possible, and as merry all day long, not a minute hanging heavy. "What," you will say, "all alone by yourself! From common civility to your husband, at least, you should not mention it." But my dear Mammi, *sachez* that I am not alone. My husband came back to me three days after he left me. His reason for turning back when he had only reached Novgorod was the state of the roads; one of the lovely effects of a Russian spring is to make them all but impassable. The half-melted snow, lying all

uneven in heaps upon a road made of round stems of trees laid across, makes it as rough as a stormy sea suddenly frozen. Then the Kibitka is the most odious of all carriages, fit for nothing but the smoothest sledging ; it would have taken him nine or ten days to get to Moscow, and so as soon as he heard this he came back, not very much to my affliction. . . . An inflammation in his eyes was beginning, and is among the Russians themselves a frequent consequence of winter travelling. Crichton has completely put a stop to it by a furious dose of jallap and a very efficacious lotion. He is now quite well and rested. I can't think of stirring out till the nasty evaporation from the lakes of melted snow which fill every street is over ; so I stay at home, extremely comfortable. . . .

We read the Berlin papers we take in, till our mouths water at the accounts of rainy days, public amusements out of doors, and villas to be let for the summer. When here we are with double windows, a sweeping north-easter, driving clouds of dust up and down the streets, and a dismal cold sky and useless sun shining all upon glaring white stone, and not yet able to bring out one bud upon the shrubs of the Imperial Gardens. To be sure, the Neva does look so surprizingly beautiful, that while one is walking near its banks it is impossible not to be pleased, in spite of the wind. The water is of the very brightest blue, and flows rapidly along, covered with pretty little boats, between quays of granite and rows of magnificent palaces. There never was, I do think, as striking and spacious and promising (?) a town as this. . . .

To the Countess Spencer.

ST. PETERSBURG,
May 10, 1814.

What do you think I have got on my table before me to-day ? Why, a portrait of Miss Acklom, my new sister.¹ The Princess Boris Galitzin, the best creature I ever knew almost, who has been all kindness to us

¹ Lord Althorp married Miss Esther Acklom, daughter of Richard Acklom, Esq., of Wiseton Hall, Notts, this year. She died in 1818, leaving no children.



*John Charles, Viscount Althorp,
from a miniature by Sir George Hayter at Hagley.*

ever since we came here, knew Miss Acklom, as she will tell you, very well indeed some years ago at Vienna, and was in correspondence with her father for a long time. She praised her extremely to me, so as to make me most happy indeed. She says, "Elle est on ne peut pas plus aimable," and quite runs on about her. What a very nice thing that marriage of my dear Althorp will be, I trust, to all of you as well as to him. . . . I cannot fancy either Althorp or sweetest Ginny¹ married people; you and Papa living *tête-à-tête* again; nor can I imagine the whole state of things—peace, quiet, no news. . . .

Paris surrendered to the Allied armies on March 31, and Napoleon was exiled to Elba.

ST. PETERSBURG,
May 20, 1814.

. . . We are not (to begin by a bull) yet gone away from this place. In spite of all our fury of impatience to jump out of *la petite fenêtre*, as Algarotti called Petersburg, most justly, we find it impossible to wind up and take leave and set out for three or four days longer; then positively we shall depart this life. We have already taken leave of the Empress, and refused her invitation to stay and see her trees budding; and after that, *vous sentez bien* that nothing could detain us. She received us last Sunday, looking most gorgeous and portly and blooming as usual—indeed, more than usual, as well she may just now, to be sure. We went, two days ago, to see two of her villas—I mean the Emperor's: Peterhof and Oranienbaum. We were accompanied by Lord Walpole and every Englishman now here travelling. The day was fine, like a tolerable hunting day at Christmas in England; not a blade of grass, not a leaf nor a snowdrop to be seen; and some patches of snow and ice are still lurking under the banks of woods and canals. As to the palaces, they were more curious than beautiful, and not much of either. One can't help hating old Peter for building his capital in so hideous and hopeless a dead flat swamp, and forcing his wretched .

¹ Lady Georgiana married Lord George Quin, son of the first Marquis of Headfort. She was married on the same day as her brother, April 14, 1814.

subjects to establish themselves in it, in spite of ague and malaria ; and this feeling really takes away much of the interest belonging to his bed-chamber, his nightcap, and dressing-gown, which are to be seen at Peterhof. Besides which, all these Imperial villas are built of wood, stuccoed over, and the stucco is tumbling off ; and the whole looks shabby, neither magnificent nor comfortable in the least degree. The road is on both sides edged with country houses, all likewise of wood, painted in patterns or stuccoed. So solid are these villas that one of them which we had admired in going out of town in the morning we found in the evening a heap of ruins, burnt to the ground entirely in two hours. So much for the Russian Wimbledon.

. . . I do nothing now but fidgett about, packing up everything, to be the quicker ready to set out for Berlin and find letters. . . . Oh, that we were but off! I can't express how *en l'air* I am already ; and I wish besides I had done with the horrid business of taking leave. In some cases it really will be painful ; to be perfectly sure one never shall see a person again, if one has seen them but once a week for six months, makes a regular wishing good-bye no pleasant business ; and in other cases, where one is not so well acquainted, it is worse to have to spend so many phrases. . . . If you should wish to hear from us by a person who has seen us very often, and if you should be in town, there will be Admiral Tschitchagoff in a month or so. He applied to us for letters of introduction. Mr. L. did not write by him to you or Papa, as perhaps you might not wish to break your teeth with his name, so he has written to Lord Lansdowne, who is apt enough to look out for odd sprinklings in his society, and will I hope have no objection to ask the Admiral. But it is no easy matter to inflict a foreign acquaintance upon one's friends at home, after all.

It is, do you know, actually raining. Soft slow drizzling rain for the first time this age since December last. All good for us ; it will lay the dust, soften the air, hurry the spring, help on the wheels, and so away to the house that Jack built. . . .

Diary.

"Riga, June 6.—We set out last Monday from St. Petersburg at ten o'clock in the morning, having risen at four, and been detained by many difficulties in repairing the new carriage and packing. Our great Russian servant, Johann ('the Tyke'), his pathetic farewell to us at the Petersburg gate, wishing me health, *plous qua Petersbourg*, and a good journey, and then walking homewards and crying as he looked after us. We arrived at Ossolia [Wolossowo?] at nine that evening through hideous, monstrous country: boundless marshy plains, no cultivation. Instead of *lilla vagn*, Britschka, Russian built, like a great garden chair or waggon, very crazy and slight, painted bright green, very tall and ugly. Inhabited by Rowland, Roberts, an ischvoschik, our handsome Russian courier, and all the baggage. Ossolia a goodish inn, kept, as they all are, by Germans. Excellent leathern sofas to sleep on, instead of stretchers. Set out Tuesday evening intending to sleep at Cewe [Jéwé?], but found the inn quite full, therefore proceeded thro' the night. Morning dawned on us on the shore of Lake Peipus. Lake like a dreary sea; flat, sandy shore. Great white eagles, called ospreys, seen stalking and sitting near the water, a few fishermen's huts scattered about. Reached Dorpat that night. Almost all the innkeepers great cheats; won't bring out horses without being bribed. We could not get on without the courier. His authority great, and vehemently exercised: he shot at a man in a wood who looked suspicious, and made the driver's nose bleed because he got off to drink at an alehouse. Well, on Thursday we reached Toilitz. Very nasty inn; little dirty rooms only parted by boards half-way up, upper part like a hen-coop on board ship. Russian boors too savage. Two of them came into the room to ask me for money, and on Rowland's attempt to turn 'em out, one laid hold of her. I instantly called Mr. L. in an extreme fright. Proceeded Friday morning and travelled again all night and reached this town (Riga) at eight in the morning. Roads so sandy we went about two miles an hour, with six horses, four abreast, two before 'em. I not a bit tired yesterday, having

slept as if in a bed. Poor Mr. Lyte quite knocked up. Riga is a large, busy, trading town—ugly, narrow streets, tall houses, inhabited by Germans, or, at least, by Livonians talking very good German. Exceeding dirt of this Hotel de Petersbourg, but good-sized rooms and intelligent waiters. Visited yesterday by Mr. Cumming the banker, a civil Scotchman. He talked politics. Let out an ugly story of the autocrat.¹ At the Battle of Bautzen the reserve of his army was detained by him about his person, to guard him. Battle was lost.² Wittgenstein said after to Alexander, ‘If your Majesty had been at Petersbourg, the battle would have been won; but to protect your sacred person, I was obliged to weaken my main army till it was overpowered.’ ‘Do you recollect,’ said the Emperor, ‘in whose presence you are?’ ‘Sire, I am at your Majesty’s commands, I am your Majesty’s officer.’ This has never been forgotten by Alexander, and Wittgenstein is not Field-Marshal, tho’ well deserving it.”

“*June 7, Riga.*—. . . Mr. Cumming paid me a long visit last night—very intelligent, right-headed man. Talked a good deal of politics. Corruption of every man in every office in Russia, no manner of use for an English Minister to be there, could do nothing but by bribery, and if that once begins, no end to it. Alexander hates Woronzow junior, and all others whom he thinks superior in talents. Strange existence of a confraternity of gamblers in this country—headquarters at Petersbourg. Travelling fellows sent out in various directions to gamble for the common stock, which pays each a percentage on winnings and supports the decayed brethren. Some men of high rank among them; one he mentioned who left an office to become member of the society. Mr. Cumming’s wise indifference about the tariff. Wretched bad treaties of commerce made hitherto, always omitting Riga, tho’ the most commercial town in Russia. It was in the seventeenth century one of the Hanseatic towns.”

¹ Alexander I.

² Or, rather, the victory was left undecided. Wittgenstein was removed from the command of the army immediately after the battle.

"*June 7, Evening.*—Mitau. Left Riga at twelve. After wriggling thro' its narrow, crowded streets, we had to wait half an hour at the bridge, which was drawn up for some ships to pass thro' it. Strange mob of fellow-sufferers waiting too, in droskies and on foot. Bearded Russians, Polish Jews, fair Germans, and savages from the country, all jabbering round us. Bridge very curious, a mere raft, sinking and rising with the carriages, and edged on both sides by tall merchant-ships, forming the only parapet. After Riga was fairly left, found ourselves on an infamously bad, rough, muddy road of *rondins*;¹ jolted one to pieces; made one tremble for the Russian-built britschka. Flat, and frightfullest possible country. The people there, tho' all speaking three languages—Russian, Curish, and German—seemed utter savages, quite frightening. We arrived here (Mitau) at a dark, beastly inn, stinking of tobacco, floors strewed *à la Suèdoise* with twigs, sand and filth. The town is hideously situated on an immense watery plain, bounded at a great distance by a stiff belt of fir-trees. Mitau itself is a dreary picture of decayed neatness and comfort. Great palace, once the Duke of Courland's, now a dismal barrack. Remains of pretty good houses and churches, must have been a cheerful sort of little capital. All this province is said to have grown worse in every respect, *à vue d'œil*, since the Russians conquered and enslaved it."

"*Frauenburg, June 8.*—Left Mitau at half-past seven very joyfully, and came on safe to the stage before this, where we got a very good-humoured German post-boy, with a bugle-horn slung over his shoulders, to drive our five horses. He kept lounging and playing his bugle instead of getting on, till after being scolded for slowness, he set off in a full gallop along a fine, smooth high-road, with a sandy ditch each side, we delighting in the pace. All at once the pole broke, the horses swerved, the carriage sunk, staggered and upset, on my side into the ditch. Gentle progress and soft shock upon sand; but then great clatter of books, boxes and bottles from the upper side of the carriage. Smash of the lower window; no other damage. Mr. L. and I emerged out of the side uppermost, unhurt,

¹ Logs.

from the baggage. . . . End of pole to be mended to-morrow, and one glass lost, and that's all the effect of our first overturn. The country grows less flat, and more woody; many pretty, clear streams, with high banks, but still bad crops and little population: that little somewhat less savage to-day than yesterday."

"*Memel, June 12, Morning.*—Performed our journey yesterday from Libau to Rutzau. Driven over a bad, sandy road, first along the sea-shore and then through an immense forest, by a Jewish *Fuhrmann*, a real brute of the most suspicious appearance and savage manners. We stopped to dine at Rutzau, a bad little inn on the skirts of the great forest. People most strange, women dressed in black tight pantaloons, bare-footed, very short petticoats, jackets, and white veils; riding astride. We proceeded into the forest after dinner. Story of 160 robbers having been expelled from it two years ago by soldiers. Jew postillion very suspiciously keeping in by-roads, winding thro' the most lonely parts of the wood, and occasionally sounding a shrill whistle. No adventure however. Reached Rutzau, and found to our dismay only a wretched thatched cottage in sort of glade of forest, knee-deep in sand, floor not close, air seen thro' in many places, and only one room. All the people looking miserable and suspicious. We slept on stretchers in *the* room, and poor Rowland and Roberts and George in the great scrambling *Wohnstube*, without undressing. Glad enough to start out this morning.

"Jew postillion tried again to go out of an excellent high-road into the winding forest paths, but was stopped by Mr. L. We then proceeded prosperously to Polangen, the Jewish-Russian frontier-town. I right glad privately to be out of the great forest and away from the Jew postillion, whom we were forced to drop short of Polangen, it being the Sabbath, and he afraid of driving in among his elders. Polangen full of Jews in long gowns and villainous faces; women with great turbans and long veils. Operations here performed of greasing the palms of custom-house officers, showing our pass, and paying and dismissing our Russian courier. Then PASSED THE BARRIER at about six o'clock this morning, 12th June, 1814. Never to be forgotten glass of wine to each of the crew

except me, given by Mr. L. on the plain just this side the frontier, and three cheers performed by him and Roberts, *faute de* more plebeians, at having left the land of cheating and got into a gentlemanlike country."

"June 12, 1814.—Changed horses at Tmersath [Nimmersatt ?], first Prussian inn. Post-boys in smart clothes; very fine sleek horses. People along the road looking ruddy, smiling, and bold, as if *free*. Reached this town (Memel) early. Acquainted here with M. de Goldbek, post director, and his wife. He is a fine spirited man, proud of his country. He told us of the insolence of the French in Prussia, and of all the miseries of their dominion. Inn good, town pretty—that is, clean and rich and commercial looking. Commerce all with England, chiefly wood, so that wood is extremely dear here. It all goes on board ship. People decidedly better, cleaner, handsomer, and happier looking than in Russia. We left Memel on the 13th at six in the morning. First crossed a long ferry crowded with merchant-ships of all sizes and many nations, and arrived and landed on the Curische Nehrung. Entered immediately upon a desert of desolate sandhills, without a shrub or a blade of grass, or a symptom of human life, except the deep traces of former travellers along the sea shore. Progress about three miles English an hour in dead silence, wading along with one wheel in the sea, and t'other on the ridge of sand near it, so as very near to overturn often. A few horses ranging about, picking up odd bits of dry grass; no other living thing but seagulls. Sand horizon moving with the wind, producing a constant haze, dazzling beyond measure—half blinded me, with the help of the sea—all diamonds from the sunshine. At last, at about two o'clock, we began to see the opposite coast approaching and soon found ourselves at an inn on the root of the Nehrung, built in a very pretty fir and pine wood. From thence to this place (Königsberg); . . . only one station, where we met and talked to an old German clergyman travelling with his son and daughter. Talked of nothing but the peace, the miseries of Prussia under France, and the general joy now. Proceeded by an excellent road thro' an open country.

enclosed with fine trees here and there—not too many firs; quite a new sort of view, more like flat parts of England. People all remarkably ruddy, hearty, stout, and cheerful, driving or walking in good number along the road. This town (Königsberg) at a distance, being in a vast enclosed plain and with many spires and churches, looks like Oxford. When you reach it, it is perceived to be very old, and rather falling to decay. Large houses out of repair, streets ill-paved; just as one would fancy an ex-capital."

"*Königsberg, June 16.*—Yesterday evening drove about with Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, Anglo-German merchants. Town surprisingly mountainous and ill-paved. Environs on all sides flat, on some marshy. No lions, but the great old palace, as old as Duke Albert in 1530. Venerable, huge Gothic towers, round a sort of irregular quadrangle. Streets all bustling and narrow. Many Jews; rich merchants here. Warehouses, strange high buildings, with motley-coloured woodwork appearing on their faces, like patchwork fronts. Many gardens in the town. University here much reduced in number of students by the war."

"*June 18.*—Yesterday, at two o'clock, we proceeded to Mrs. Phillips's dinner, and found, to our infinitely disagreeable surprise, that it was a gala mercantile *Schmaus* [banquet] in honour of the peace. Sad work. Near forty people at dinner. My neighbour, M. le Comte de Sievers, Russian Governor, too silly and pompous and dull; t'other side a white counting-house clerk. Opposite, M. de Dohna, enormous Prussian pudding of a man; next him a little black, dirty one, in his morning dress and boots, unkempt and unwashed entirely: spat on his plate as if it had been a spitting-box, took snuff, and argued vehemently up the nose of his neighbour. M. le Comte van Heiden, great Dutchman, overwhelming Mr. L., but sensible and frank in his manner till he got drunk. (Mem., his embracing Mr. L. after dinner, and with what force!) Various other vulgar English and ugly Prussians, all squeezed at a table fit for twenty people, our elbows pinned awry to our sides, and half the talk consisting of apologies for *polts* and thumps unintentional. Band of music close to the door in the

garden murdering ‘Rule, Britannia,’ and deafening us all with the great drum. Ladies rose first, and proceeded to the drawing-room, where we were edified by the gentlemen’s conviviality, Mr. Phillips’s toast-master getting drunk, and proposing the ‘Allierte’ and the Emperor Alexander’s health, while cannon fired, band thundered, company roared, and mob stood all about the house in envious admiration. Gentlemen came out after some time, and relieved us from a painful circle of Prussian ladies. Some of the guests flushed, hoarse and mellow, rather nasty. (Mr. L. quite sober; looked nice.) After much teasing we at last got away.”

“*Berlin, Sunday, June 26, 1814.*—Arrived here at the Sun Hotel yesterday at six or seven o’clock. All the towns on this road have been ruinous looking, quite unrepaired and dirty; inhabitants on the whole seem poor; country very barren, except as to trees, which are often magnificent; oaks beyond measure large and fine, near Custrin particularly. large woods of them, and of lime, beech, and poplar, Often, however, only a vast fir-forest far and wide, very dreary; road always infamous thro’ it. Thursday stopped to dine at Hochzeit. Venerable old man the postmaster. We talked long with him about the late sufferings of Prussia. He himself had had a French captain and two or three officers quartered upon him when their troops were stationed about the country after the Peace of Tilsit. They consumed in eleven weeks three fat oxen, sixty sheep, and ten hogs. The poor old man obliged besides to pay 10,000 dollars in three years towards the contribution. He said much of the extreme insolence of the French: burning down a village if refused anything; despising the Germans openly. Old man very well convinced of the merit of England in the war. ‘Immer standhaft, etc.’ Proceeded to Friedeberg, next day to Custrin. Left it early, and travelled with still improving horses and smart postilions to this place (Berlin). We entered of course by the Frankfurter Thor; every street improved upon the last till we reached this beautiful situation, Unter den Linden.”

To Earl Spencer.

BERLIN,
July 1, 1814.

The state of France seems to be so unsettled that I can't much wonder at you if you have been deterred by that consideration from going there yet. Thank you very much for your useful caution about towns where any great battles have lately been fought ; we will certainly make every sort of enquiry before we go into any. Leipsic we had thought of, but not yet, and not at all unless it is quite safe. How very horrid it must be to get a putrid fever from such a cause ! People who travelled in this part of the world soon after the campaign have described the state of the roads as really insupportable from the remains of slaughter. We saw nothing of it, thank God, on our journey, except in the large forest between this and Königsberg many skeletons of horses, more, I think, than would have been left about in time of peace ; and the whole appearance of some of the towns, particularly Custrin, was deplorable. All the suburbs of Custrin were burnt down ; and the old dark, weather-beaten fortifications and drawbridges and moats, and great gates with black eagles upon them, looked half sublime, but most melancholy. Tall poles, with pitch barrels at the top of them, were still remaining in many of the high situations, as a gathering mark for the *Landwehr* ; and one could not talk to any peasant or innkeeper without perceiving the spirit which prevailed all over this country when they once set about it. As to this place, it is delightful ; not so magnificent-looking as Petersburg to be sure, but much pleasanter. The number of green trees and gardens in the town itself, the great breadth of the streets, and the extreme purity of the air, make it in this fine weather quite as pleasant as a town need be.

"Potsdam, July 4.—We left Berlin at twelve o'clock to-day. Stopped on the way by meeting two regiments of Prussian Volunteers returning from France. Great huzzaing ; mob of decent citizens throwing flowers and oaken garlands to the soldiers, who were all decorated with them ; great gaiety of the scene, and how pleasant ! This town, like other Prussian ones, out of all repair, but must have been pretty."

"*Potsdam, July 5.*—Delightful day. We set out early this morning in the Maberly and pair for Sans Souci at an English mile from this. Saw first the gallery of pictures, on a green ground ; a pity. Some good Titians, many fine Rubens, some Vandycks, and many monsters by the Cicerone (?) to supply the place of those picked out by the French. After that walked to the real Sans Souci, a long, low pavillion built of white stone. Dining-room of marble, fine, large Turkey carpet, the first we have seen abroad. Frederick the Great's bedroom where he died. His library and little boudoir all untouched ; even the book he was reading when interrupted by his last illness. It was "Art de la Guerre par Puysegur."¹ Then proceeded to the new palace about a mile further. Approach and exterior very handsome and royal. Entrance from *perron* at once into a splendid and striking great hall. Two great pictures, one by Luca Giordano and t'other by some painter whose name I forget, as well as many statues and twenty-eight antique busts, have been taken away to Paris. Old Cicerone spoke of it with much wrath."

They went on to Dresden, where they stayed a month, and then travelled to Leipsic, whence the diary continues :

"*September 11, 1814.*—We left Dresden last Friday. The country looks ugly when you have left the Elbe side, and this town is in a frightful vast plain, endless, and horrid from notion of many battles ; fine too on same account when one thinks more ; all cultivated now. Leipsic large Oxfordish town from the road. Mr. L. has been out to walk over the famous eventful market-place where the four great armies met last October."

"*September 12, 1814.*—Invaded after breakfast to-day by Herr Proclomator Weizel, a mercantile Gelehrte. He took us first to the observatory, and then took us up to the fine airy balcony, overlooking all the eventful plain, quite an endless one it seemed. Went on with Weizel, he abusing English extravagance in

¹ The book that is now (1909) shown as being the last he read is one of French poetry.

books, and boasting of all manner of German things, botheringly and teasingly, to the Burgerschule. Great clean orderly establishment for 700 citizens' children, girls and boys. Each pays but about a guinea and a half a year, and learn reading, writing, accounts, geography, Latin, and general knowledge on subjects of natural history. We attended a lesson given to a room full of girls, on natural history. Pretty girls of all ages answering very unshyly and not particularly well. Mem., remarkable expression of the master's, '*If we assent to the Mosaical account of the creation, I thought very wrong, particularly vu l'auditori (sic).*' Heard from Weizel of a fine school for 700 poor children here, and six or seven other great schools, so that 7,000 children receive instruction daily in this town. All boys and girls always educated in public. After dinner took a walk to buy a book ; found town very busy, airy and thriving looking ; very oddly and evidently full of trade ; passed ten or twelve great *Buchhändlungs* in our walk, besides booths, and we met two or three people driving wheelbarrows along laden with books, in sheets as they are all sold."

"*Cassel*,¹ 26th.—Rose early in glorious warm dazzling weather. Breakfast and then a visit from the Hofrath Volkel ; very civil ; talked of his journey to Paris three months ago to recover stolen goods, and of the sad oppressions and extortions of King Jerome *l'unique*."

"*September 27.*—Still here at this excellent inn *zum Kurfürst*. This morning we went to the Museum Fredericianum with Mr. Volkel, who turns out a very sensible man with an irritable sort of manner, chiefly arising from his late vexations and miseries under King Jerome. . . . We saw a suite of rooms, once part of the Museum, since seized by Jerome as a passage to his *chambre des États du Royaume*, where he collected the deputies to require of them the imposition of fresh taxes. Room very high, adorned in compartments with French eagles, Jerome's cypher (in German, H. N. —i.e., Hieronymus Napoleon—called by the Hessian peasants Hans Narr and Hat Nichts)."

¹ Cassel, in Westphalia. Jerome Bonaparte had been made King of Westphalia by his brother, and was deposed at his fall.

Mr. Lyttelton and his wife left Cassel September 23, and went to Geissen, where they were "kept awake half the night by horns blown to mark the hour, under our windows, and by a standing army of watchdogs, barking at every door."

"*Limburg.* — All the country from Cassel quite beautiful . . . Towns almost all provided with a ruined castle on a heap of rocks; town itself gathered close round and about the foot. . . . Yesterday we dined at another castled town—Marburg. Market-place there full of people, it being market day. Curious costume of the women. All black, that is, upper dress five petticoats, hardly to the knees, worn at once, each of some different coloured woollen stuff, plaited immensely thick, and padded at the hips, so as to look too comical. Upper one always black. Cap, a little stiff black thing, like an Otaheite helmet, with the back part before. Long tresses of hair hanging behind. Very frightful altogether, and exceedingly dirty and stinking."

Soon after this the diary breaks off. The travellers went to Paris, but there are no records left of their stay there. They were back in England by Christmas, after an absence of a year and a half.

CHAPTER VIII

1817-1820

THERE is a gap in the correspondence from October, 1814, till June, 1817, and we lose all record of the stirring events which culminated in the Battle of Waterloo. The years which immediately followed were a period of severe internal distress and discontent throughout the kingdom. The burden of the cost of the war fell heavily on the people, and the great rise in the price of wheat, owing to the Corn Law of 1815, as well as the stagnation of trade, due to the financial prostration of other European nations, produced a crisis of unusual severity.

At the same time the newly-aroused spirit of Radicalism was rapidly permeating the masses, and led to many conflicts, including the notorious "Peterloo massacre" at Manchester in 1819.

The chapter concludes with a series of letters written by Lady Spencer, Lady Sarah's mother, during a tour in Italy. These letters are very entertaining, owing to the outspoken comments on incidents and individuals which they contain.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

RICHMOND,
June 5, 1817.

My mother comes every now and then to see us from London, where the world has been all in a high fever of

late about the Speaker's election, and the Oxford election, and reports of a change of ministers. I mean not a radical change such as good Whigs pray for, but a walking out of Lord Castlereagh, and a walking in of *Orange* Peel, who is the great man in the whole country, since he made that famous fine speech against the Irish Catholics. But I don't think there seems to be any foundation for this report of change. Mr. Lyttelton is going to town to-day to try and do some good to the poor chimney-sweepers; Lord Milton is going to present a petition for them.

Sir Robert Peel was at this time Secretary for Ireland, and was chosen member for Oxford University on account of his hostility to the Catholic Emancipation Bill.

In the next letter Mr. Lyttelton gives his wife an amusing account of an evening revel enjoyed by her brother Bob.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

No. 2, COMMON HARD, PORTSMOUTH,
June 22, 1817.

... I did not arrive here till past seven, and found Bob and Boxer ready to receive me at a little round table, to which we pretty soon sate down, and it was a very good dinner, but I almost entirely banyanned¹ and drank very little else than water, but I enjoyed the talk and the whole thing very much. In your ear—there had been a vast debauch here the night before. Seven of them, naval cocks, with Bob President and his Purser Vice, had finished twenty-one bottles, and had had coffee, two teas, two suppers, and some interludes of devils of various kinds. It was not over till past five, when Bob, waking after a nap of several hours, found the Purser sitting in the beam of the rising sun, with a segar in his mouth, and was saluted by him with "Good-morning, Captain Spencer, here's your Vice-President." The fellow had not stirred from that seat, nor ceased filling his most absorbent

¹ "To banyan" = to eat no meat. Dr. Banyan was an advocate of vegetarianism.

sponge of a carcase since he opened the business at about twelve hours before. Bob says he is very glad I did not come a day sooner, for he thinks this jollification would have been too much for me, and so think I unquestionably. . . .

Princess Charlotte, daughter of the Prince Regent, who in May, 1816, had married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (afterwards King of the Belgians), died in giving birth to a stillborn child on November 6, 1817.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

WIMBLEDON,

November 7, 1817.

. . . The bright sunshine and high wind have really done us some good ; we wanted some enlivening after that gloomy day of yesterday ! I don't think I ever spent so melancholy a one in my life. We heard at Roehampton to-day no further details about the poor Princess (Charlotte) of any consequence, only more and more accounts of the extraordinary patience and fortitude with which she bore her long sufferings.

Maria¹ had seen Lady Georgina Bathurst, whose whole conversation on the subject of the Princess was directed to prove that the Prince Regent was suffering dreadfully, and shewing the deepest paternal feeling. They say Ministers are much alarmed at the violent indignation everyone expresses at his having been absent at such a time, as well as the Queen.² . . .

Mr. Lyttelton wrote the following letter from Paris, where he had gone with Lord Lansdowne.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

PARIS,

November 18, 1817.

I am writing to you snugly at ten o'clock at night instead of being at Mme. la Comtesse de Molé's,³ the

¹ Lady Duncannon.

² Queen Charlotte.

³ Count Louis de Molé was at this time Minister of Marine. He became Minister for Foreign Affairs after the Revolution of 1830, and in 1836 Prime Minister. He died in 1855.

Ministress of Marine. And why, Monsieur? Why, because our company staid so after dinner chatting till quarter before ten, and when we presented ourselves at the Hotel de la Marine (I mean the Minister's house), we were poked back and our horses' noses were actually bruised by the gates slammed upon them, and then came the Suisse with an exclamation that "Madame ne recevoit pas après 9 heure et demie!"

The dinner was very pleasant. A round table with Sismondi, Gallois, Dumont,¹ Fazakerly and *Lord L.*—, and *L. tout simple*, and that was all. Those fellows were more entertaining than edifying perhaps, but Dumont was the only one who talked *philosophically*, and there was no indecency or irreverence either in anything that he said. One or two subjects were mentioned which gave occasion for letting out one's principles a little. Would you believe it, they have again lately refused interment in consecrated ground to an actress. The populace forced their way into the church and lit up all the tapers, and there was a great row about it. The curé was forced to bury the woman. Sismondi was keen and discerning and playful too in conversation, a peculiar mixture of the Italian and the Frenchman. But Gallois I like best; in manner and, as far as I can see, in character I never met with a man more simple and unaffected, and he has a fine clear intelligent countenance, and not a trace of pretension or grimace in him. Lord L., who has known him long, says he unites the best qualities of the two nations, I mean the French and English.

The dinner at Stuart's² was a mere English one—Lord and Lady W. Bentinck, Sir J. Warren and Lady, Sir Charles Doyle of the Peninsula, Lord and Lady Rancliffe, and old General Arabin. The dinner was good. We got up all together, men and women, and went out, *donnant les bras*, after the foreign fashion, in less than half an hour after the dessert was served,

¹ Pierre Etienne Dumont, the political writer, had been tutor to Lord Lansdowne, and had lived for some years at Bowood. Sismondi, the historian, wrote "The History of the Italian Republics," and other books.

² Sir Charles Stuart, then British Ambassador to Paris; afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

and then we sate on an hour or more in the drawing-room....

The description in the following letter of the benches "with backs" in the orchestra shows how unusual it was to see a play from there rather than a box.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

PARIS,
November 26, 1817.

... I made my apology yesterday for not dining at Lord Lucan's, because I wanted to see Mlle. Duchênois¹ in "Phèdre." She is certainly a fine actress. She has a very ugly hard face, but a very affecting voice and spirited. Her figure is fine, and especially her arms very graceful. Never were worse sticks than the other performers. Nothing can be pleasanter than going into the orchestra, which, you know, means some benches with backs to them between the pit and the fiddlers, where the real critics and the old encores are to be found. An additional advantage, as you may always talk to them and they are flattered, and will hold forth to you, and will tell you all about it. It is indeed a rare agreeable way of spending an evening. By going half an hour before the curtain draws up, you are sure of the very best places imaginable, so good that Lord Lansdowne says, when he is there, he cannot help feeling as if the play were all acted for him, and nothing can be more natural. The actors all seem to address themselves so entirely to you, and you see so perfectly well all that is going on on the stage....

We were let in the other night at Mme. Molé's, and very politely received by Mons. the Minister, who is a plain gentlemanlike man enough, and his wife, a very good-humoured one. There were but five or six people there. It was what they call *petit comité*, and nothing could be less ceremonious, with a proper degree of good breeding however. Last night I was

¹ The famous French actress.

introduced by Lord L. at Countess Rumford's, and we passed a good hour and a half there, with about a dozen other people. The evening went off pleasantly enough, and finished with ice and cakes and tea made in the room with a great monster of an urn by Mme. la Comtesse herself. She talked a great deal to me, and concluded by asking me to dine with her on Monday, and to come to another soirée on Friday, both of which summons I shall duly attend to. To quiet your apprehensions I will just add that Mme. de Rumford is like Sidney Smith, French Simpson, and Lady de Grey.

In May Mr. Lyttelton was present on Speech Day at Rugby, where he had been educated. Chantrey (afterwards Sir Francis), the sculptor, whom he met, was also a Rugbeian.

LONDON,
May 13, 1818.

. . . The Rugby dinner was very well attended. . . . Chantrey was there, and I had some conversation with him before dinner, and amongst other things Flaxman's best work at the Exhibition was mentioned, on which C. said that, like most of Flaxman's other works, it was finely conceived but imperfectly executed. I said I supposed he thought it gave an air of freedom to his work to neglect the finishing a little; on which Chantrey observed that marble was a bad material to sketch in. We drank his health, which I conclude he anticipated, for he begged me to say for him a very few words about Dr. James's monument, which I should have thought he might very easily have uttered himself, but I was convinced of the contrary when I saw how he blushed and was distressed in simply returning thanks. What is worth remarking though is, that he abstains from speaking at all of himself in public (so he told me) on the conviction that artists in particular run both into extreme egotism and pedantry—and don't you think this is very just? He quoted Flaxman and West. Also we had Macready,¹ who was obliged

¹ The celebrated tragic actor. He made his first appearance in London in September, 1816, and was at this time twenty-five years old.

to go away to act Rob Roy, after which he joined us again. I was introduced to him at his own request by Mr. Birch, his tutor, and I found him a very peculiarly modest and prepossessing man in his general look and manner, and the few words he said in returning thanks when his health was drunk, were really quite beautiful, and the delivery equally so. I have great hopes of his making a great actor. He is very young. . . .

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. Frederick Spencer.

WIMBLEDON PARK, June 8, 1818.

MY DEAREST FRITZ,— . . . London will be quite as empty as it is now full in a few days, for the poor old Parliament is just tottering on the brink of dissolution. Last Saturday was to have been its death-day; the Regent was going down in great state to give it the *coup de grâce*, all the fine ladies were taking their places in the House of Lords to hear his speech, and be in at the death, when all at once it was put off. The Ministers very unexpectedly failed in carrying some point, in the Alien Bill, just as they wished, and rather than give it up they determined the House should sit a few more days, till they could get the better. So now they say Thursday will be the day of dissolution, after which every creature who can get a conveyance will pour out of London in all [directions] to go and vote, or be voted for or against, at some [*torn*], and the country will be filled for forty days with drunkenness, and riot, and quarrelling, and chairing, and hurry, and heat, and everything most odious, just now when one ought to be listening to nightingales and watching rosebuds! Mr. Lyttelton and Althorp come in very quietly without opposition for their old seats. They will just have to go down and get elected and dead drunk once, and then it will be over, and they may return to their wives, who both of us are waiting in near expectation of lying in. They (the Althorps) have borrowed Lord Milton's airy great house in Grosvenor Place, the owners being gone to Westfield, which has been lent them for sea air. Poor

Esther¹ enjoys the change, as Pall Mall and her next neighbour the Prince Regent were very noisy for a woman in her state.

. . . God bless you, my dearest Fritz. I forgot to say the old Queen is dying as fast as she can. If she dies before Thursday it will defer the dissolution, because some bill must be brought in about her successor in the care of the King. So the politicians are all upon the watch, and it is fine time for news-gathering.

Yours most affectionately,
S. L.

Queen Charlotte, wife of George III., died in November. Parliament was dissolved at the end of this year, and Lord Liverpool's Government remained in office, notwithstanding its unpopularity.

Lady Georgiana Quin to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

August 10, 1818.

. . . I dare say you were very much shocked at poor Esther's death. It was at all events a most melancholy thing for poor Althorp losing her. I hear that Althorp is still quite wretched. He is at Wiseton with Mrs. Acklom. He is so anxious to do his duty that he stays entirely with her, which is a great trial to him, for you may imagine the violence of her grief, as she don't exert herself at all to keep up under her trial. Althorp has behaved like an angel, they all say.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

RICHMOND,
September, 1818.

. . . We have, by the way, quite surprised and rather shocked the Miss Fanshawes, by our (or rather Mr. L.'s, for he was the resolver) not to tea-drink. Tea-drinking

¹ Lady Althorp died on June 11, to the great grief of her husband. She never got over the shock of Princess Charlotte's death. The child also died.

is rather too much the order of the day here, and though doing so occasionally with them would be very well, doing so every evening with somebody or other would be sad work, and must infallibly drive my husband to the ale-house. So we only see our friends in the morning. Miss Catherine Fanshawe is not well yet, I think, though she is so patient and gentle she always describes herself as "better." But her spirits are as good as ever, and most agreeable and clever she is. I don't wonder at your friendship. . . .

Miss Catherine Fanshawe, the poetess, is best known by the famous poem on the letter "H," beginning :

"'Twas whispered in Heaven, 'twas muttered in Hell ;
And Echo caught faintly the sound as it fell."

Mr. Lyttelton, writing from Worcester, September 19, 1818, gives an account of some concerts, evening parties and dinners he had been attending during the election, and says that he is very well in spite of it all. "Tippling, thank God! is quite gone by in this country, which to be sure is a most blessed change. Ah me! that it did not take place twelve years ago. It would have saved me many a sad and fretful hour. . . ." A few days later he describes a quaint old country house in the depths of Worcestershire, and the sober party he enjoyed there.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

MERE GREEN HALL,
September 22, 1818.

. . . I am here in an old black-and-white striped house at the foot of a wooded hill, with a broad avenue of old elms leading up to it, and a court with little pavilions at the corners in front, in the centre of which are large iron gates, and over the old porch at some height in the building, is the date thirteen hundred and odd (a fib, they say, of one of

the late proprietors), and a very ancient appearance of things within to correspond with this venerable exterior. We dined yesterday *en grand comité* of squires and clergymen, but there was no boozing, and the wine was excellent. The old lady received me in a lightish silk gown and handsome cap, and was excessive courteous and gracious, with her niece by her side, who is her Miss Port¹ and the comfort of her life. Finally, to give some notion of what sort of room I was in, imagine a good large one, with large bed, large screen, up-and-down floor, old carved gilt looking-glass stuck up quite in a wrong place and almost in a corner, and a portrait over the chimney-piece of the young lady of the manor sixty years ago, *en diane* with crescent and bow, and greyhound looking fondly up from the corner of the canvass at his charming mistress. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

STANFORD COURT,
October 7, 1819.

. . . I am sorry to perceive that you have had a little uneasiness on the score of my politics. I assure you, whatever I may think of these scurvy *Radicals*, they have not much occupied my mind of late, and I hope you will not distress yourself on the subject. It is indeed very clear that, one way or another, the Manchester affair and its consequences will bring on discussion enough, and much of it is very knotty, and whether right or wrong, much will be said and done in relation to it. However, let all that pass. I think it becomes you much, and it is a very good habitual state of mind for a woman not to concern herself at all about politics, except when they force themselves on her attention; and I think I am to blame in having said so much to you on the subject, and still more so, perhaps, in having allowed them to engross so much of my own attention at times when I was not called upon to act at all in respect of such matters. . . .

¹ Miss Port was the niece of the celebrated Mrs. Delany, and lived with her till she died.

Mr. Lyttelton, while cordially supporting the Whigs in their general policy, regarded with no favour the revolutionary faction of the Radicals. When the Government introduced the Seditious Meetings Prevention Bill, he made an important speech (December 2), in which, while advocating that measure, he blamed the Ministry for having contributed, by want of tact and conciliation, to the disturbances.

In a letter to her brother Frederick two months later, Lady Sarah explains that the reason for her uneasiness about her husband's politics was her fear of the parental disapproval.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. Frederick Spencer.

PUTNEY, December 5, 1819.

. . . We all of us, as it happens, lose less comfort and pleasure by being dispersed over the face of land and water this year than we *might* have done.¹ For there would have been no Althorp Christmassing on account of the early meeting of Parliament and the important and strange state of politics this Session. I can't help wishing my Father *here*, not only on public grounds, and because all men like him should be in England at such a time of great distress and alarm, but because, privately speaking, his being here would enable him to judge as he *cannot* do now, impartially, as to *who* is in the right among the fifty thousand parties into which the House of Commons has *crumbled*; and as Althorp and Mr. Lyttelton happen to be just at the two farthest extremes, you can surely understand that *I* am a little uneasy about it. However, they are both, thank God, as honest as the sun, and each quite sure of his opinions, and perfectly candid and good friends; and for my own very private

¹ Lord and Lady Spencer and George Spencer had gone to Italy to visit Lady Georgiana Quin, who, with her husband, was living there for economy's sake.

consolation Mr. L., tho' he differs from most of the Opposition, and often votes against them, as to the best method of quelling the riots, yet continues to be very favourably looked upon, and made so very good a speech the other night that I have heard of nothing but compliments on it from all sorts of people ever since, *ce qui me console.* . . .

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

SPENCER HOUSE,
December 9, 1819.

. . . Mr. Lyttelton was up all night again last night, and he spoke quite remarkably well. My brother tells me it was really a capital speech, and much the best he had ever made in that House. Ah, you wicked *Tory woman*, you will say all that comes to reward him for voting *with* Ministers! Anyhow, my dear good brother's praise never was more impartially bestowed or more to be believed, for he quite differs from my husband just now. My said husband is called in the House "one of the Manchester yeomanry," because he lays about him against both parties equally, cutting down first the *Radicals* and then the *special* constables (alias the Ministers). He is satisfied with no party, and of course stands and votes quite by himself altogether. I am so glad he spoke well, it will make him more *asy* in his mind, for politics have made him very unhappy of late. He is so terribly a patriot in earnest, all this state of affairs affects him quite like a private misfortune. . . .

George III. died on January 29, aged eighty-two, having reigned longer than any previous Sovereign of England.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. Frederick Spencer.

PUTNEY, January 31, 1820.

Before you open this letter you will have been told that the poor old, old King, George the Third, he who has reigned over us, our fathers and grandfathers, from time immemorial, is dead! George the Fourth, whom

Heaven preserve, was proclaimed to-day all over London. Parliament sat yesterday thro' Sunday to swear in the new Privy Council, and is to *sit* again in a fortnight till it is dissolved on the 5th March ; and then the eye loses itself in a dusty, gloomy prospect of chaos, riots, drunkenness, bribes, and bustles—a General Election, in short, which is again to spoil a pretty, fresh, clean spring for us. Such is the great news, and a fine rout it makes. Can't you imagine how my father and mother would like to be in London now, watching and listening, and talking over this like all the rest of the world ? But there they are instead, devoured by *ennui* at Naples. . . .

The following letters from Lady Spencer during their tour abroad give a vivid, if somewhat unconventional, description of the discomforts of travelling on the Continent in 1819. She, with Lord Spencer and their son George, had just arrived in Paris. The punctuation is added, as, except for an occasional dash, there never is a stop of any sort, and the spelling is her own.

The Countess Spencer to Lady Sarah Lyttelton

HÔTEL TERRACE DES THUILLERIES,
RUE DE RIVOLI, PARIS,
Sunday, September 19, 1819.

. . . As for the day of the month or the year, it is out of the question. I have completely lost all recollection, my very dearly loved Sally, of everything but that I am at last where I never expected to find myself, where, however, I arrived about two hours ago, along with all my fellow-travellers, in perfect health, and where the noise, the worry, and the want of every comfort leave me with not one idea but that I so love you and all my dear ones just as I may be supposed to do in a place where no one would care if I died in the next five minutes. We are in a very shewy hotel overlooking the T. gardens, and in the thoroughfare of the entire population of this screaming, chattering, gesticulating, and cheating city. So you may imagine my state, having just settled myself in a *petit coin* of my

own, and having had the pleasure of directing every individual circumstance belonging to my person and habits to Bishop the slow and Rebecca the quick. Anything like the helpless stupidity of Bishop I never saw; but Rebecca improves, and is very handy indeed. She is scared like ten hunted hares, but she thinks only of me, and is therefore very useful.

Thank God, on Thursday we proceed onwards. Lord Spencer is all life and delight, and is now on his tramps in a *fiacre* with his *laquais de place*. George and *le petit supôt d'Esculape*¹ are gone to gape and stare. We are thankful indeed for having got Cavani;² he is as yet perfection—*c'est le mot*. Jean Martinet is my staff; William quite at home and useful; Drew handy as possible, and excellent at providing Lord S. luncheon every day, and our breakfast for *la mangeaille* is entirely his concern. Our carriage is a roomy and convenient hotel,³ and the easiest and lightest Berline I ever went in; the two German barouches for George and the doctor, and the other for Drew and *ces dames*, and the *fourgon*, containing every possible household and personal *attirail*, compose our train—thirteen horses and eleven people. Everyone has their own work to do, and no one more than he can well do; and François, tho' last, not least, just what he ought to be.

We are under the expectation of having the most horrible addition to our constant *tracas* inflicted on us, for the Duchesse de Berri is hourly expected to kitten, and if it is a son the roar of cannon is to deafen the living and raise the dead.⁴

We had no accident of any note during our journey. The road thro' the ugliest country I ever saw, but it caused the most fervent heart-burnings to Lord S., for he never was one moment without lamenting he had it not to shoot in, and every *remise* for game absolutely drove him wild, besides the envyings of the sportsman. Well now, my own darling, I must come home,

¹ A Dr. Wilson whom they took with them.

² Cavani, the courier. He had been in Napoleon's service all through the Russian campaign.

³ George Spencer writes of this vehicle: "Thrupp's carriage does to admiration, and so do the beds, chairs, and table."

⁴ It was a daughter, afterwards Duchess of Parma.

and speak about you and yours . . . tho' far away in body, yet in mind I am amongst you, my dear ones. . . .

MILAN, October 13, 1819.

MY DEAREST BELOVED SAL,—. . . You are already apprized of our having passed the Simplon most gallantly; but how surfeited I am for life of sublimities! Oh, may I never see rock, torrent, cascade, or snow-topped mountain again. We were thirteen hours in the carriage going over this eternal road, and, what with bodily fatigue and mental fright, I never was so tired in all my life. However *me voici, grâce à Dieu*; and I may rejoice in the certainty of never undergoing the Simplon again. . . . I enjoyed the beautiful flat road by the side of the Lago Majiore beyond any day's journey I ever went. George wrote to you from Sécheron. He will have told you of our goings on till we reached that most filthy, beastly, squalid, tumble-down, impertinent inn. . . . I shall spin out a good rig to you, my sweetest Sal, at my ease, writing at my own travelling-table, and sitting in my own travelling-chair, in a room where the sun never shone—it cannot, for our opposite neighbour can shake hands with me out of his window into mine, and the house is six stories high; and every street in Milan is equally narrow, and anything like the dullness this produces I cannot describe. . . .

I went out yesterday to see the Duomo—York Minster is worth a hundred such. Colonel Browne, Lord Stewart's private secretary, who is here on a very particular affair, and who is collecting evidence (about) certain facts which are as clear as noonday,¹ dines with us to-day. I had an offer yesterday of a place in Lady Colchester's² opera-box; but my heart failed me, and I sent an excuse to her, for I was terrified at the bore of being so many hours shut up with her and little Pomposo, her lord and master. George and Dr. Wilson have been twice to the Opera, but I can't yet muster spirit enough to encounter the worry of going. However, I will really go before I

¹ For the trial of Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales, which took place the following year. She lived for some time at Milan.

² Wife of Charles Abbot, first Lord Colchester, for many years Speaker of the House of Commons.

leave this, to avoid the plague of explaining why I did not see "La Scala," which they make such a fuss about.

If I find any Englishwoman going home by a diligence, I think it very probable that Mrs. Bishop may be vomitted out at the Black Bear, Piccadilly, *un beau matin*. I can't find words to describe her stupidity and ill-temper. . . .

MILAN, October 19, 1819.

MY DEAREST BELOVED SAL,—To-morrow we proceed to Florence, since, alas! there remains no hope of a vessel at Genoa for us. And to say how sorry I am for this disappointment is impossible. The accounts of the frequent robberies are horrid; and tho' we are assured that with four carriages no family was ever attacked, yet it is most disagreeable to be told that within the last three weeks eleven carriages have been robbed within two miles of Milan. At Cesto Calenti, just the day before we came thro' it, thirty-two brigands had been taken who had been playing the devil, tho' they are reckoned very agreeable ones in comparison of the Roman gentry between Terracina and Mola di Gaeta, for they only take everything you possess, desiring you in the meanwhile to lie on the ground face downwards that you may not watch them, and the Roman ones take one of your party up to the mountains as a hostage until a sum of money is paid as a ransom. The other day this agreeable adventure took place in the person of Brignolai, the Genoese banker's son, who was travelling with his tutor. The young man was hurried off to the mountains, and his father was informed if in a very short time specified he did not pay 20,000 ducats his son's nose and ears should be cut off, and he should receive him in that condition. The tutor went back to Naples and collected 5,000, and they were content to take this sum and let go the young one. However, we are to take guards wherever there are reports of these very devils, and we begin at Bologna to take this precaution. What a state of society! At Florence I hope to let you know that I can still take my *vingrille* (?), and that we shall escape all the horrors of Mrs. Radcliffe's novels, and that the only castles of Udolpho which we shall see will be the inns, every one of which might easily pass for one.

Our stay here has not been unpleasant at all, for tho' I have scarcely stirred out, yet I have had so many visitors, and I have enjoyed the quiet and rest from travelling most delectably. Richard¹ is so much better for our arrival that he is not the same being, and accordingly his spirits are extravagant. He sends to Lord S. every day ortolans and quails dressed by his cook to come in at our second course, and I really am quite miserable at Lord S.'s eating of them as he does; but I can neither prevent Richard nor Lord S. from doing as they choose.

Lord and Lady Charlemont² are here. One of their girls is attended by Dr. Wilson. By way of educating these children Lady C. has taken them everywhere on the Alps and elsewhere; and this girl, who is eleven years old, rode eight hours to the top of *le grand St. Bernard*, and when they all arrived there extenuated with fatigue they were favoured with a snowstorm, which nearly buried them alive, and every one of them was *à la mort* afterwards, Lady C. dieing of an inflammation in her chest, and all the children, Dr. W. says, fairly worn down and very ill. I should like to know what recollection a poor infant will retain of the sublimities of the Alps who has so severely suffered from seeing them. Only hatred and aversion to anything like them. . . .

I went the other day to see the palace which Bonaparte furnished, and so magnificent and comfortable a house I never saw in England or anywhere else. We were desired to follow the guide to see what he announced as a most curious and extraordinary thing through several rooms. He opened a door out of a splendid room, and we were shown into a water-closet, and were shown the machinery as a stupendous production of human genius. I am sure it did my heart good to see this admirable convenience, for since I left London my eyes have not been blessed by the

¹ Lord Lucan.

² Anne Birmingham, wife of the second Earl of Charlemont, was a very beautiful woman. Thomas Moore, who was in Milan at this time, wrote: "The effect she produces here with her beauty is wonderful. Last night, at the Countess of Albany's, the Italians were ready to fall down and worship her." All her four children died young. She did not die till 1876.

sight of any such thing ; and as for what there are to supply the place of such—oh, good Lord! . . .

FLORENCE, November 3, 1819.

. . . We are arrived thus far, thank God ! on our never-ending progress. I always held the Apennines in detestation, and they have not increased in favour in our late passage over them, for they are frightful, dismal, without any marked feature—all desolation and wretchedness—and as for inns, oh, oh, such *coupe gorge* caverns!¹ However, Lord S. had William to sleep in his room ; George and the doctor likewise in one room, and I with the two women in mine ; and in an adjoining hole Jean Martinet and François, with a kind of screen our only separation. It is wonderful to find in travelling on the Continent how soon all distinction of rank and sex is lost. We all now have got to that agreeable state of savage life ; and only that we still keep up that rare and useless custom of washing and swashing, we should pig it as comfortably as they wallow in Italy, where regularly the Vetturino travellers, men and women, sleep in one room, and where by no chance at the inns where they stop, and where sometimes we are obliged to sleep, do you find looking-glasses, basons, bottles, or tables, for any toilet whatever, but generally four beds and two or three ricketty stools for seats, and no other furniture whatever *à la lettre*. We found this town up to the brim with English, and with difficulty found a place to put our heads in. However, we did at last at Schreydorff's insinuate ourselves into the still warm dirt of a family who had gone away two hours before. . . . I found another old face I was glad to see—my sister's—nothing was ever like our incessant gossip. . . . Eleanor² is lodged in the Palazzo Mancini, in a most excellent apartment indeed. One floor of dozens of good rooms admirably furnished. Her

¹ It was a place called Cavigliajo. “There never was such an inn as that,” wrote George Spencer, “and we were, moreover, very near not getting any room in that, bad as it was. Cavani just galloped past another party and beat them by five minutes. The consequence was they had to dine in the common room with the *voituriers* at other tables, and sleep all in the same room.”

² Lady Eleanor Lindsay.

daughters are most comfortable good girls, one frittfuller than the other, except Nanny, who is really a very well-looking girl. My sister is as happy as a being must be who is in eternal good-humour with every creature, beginning with herself. She has not acquired one word of Italian, but she lives in the very best society here. She means to remain in Italy two years longer, and she is much in the right of it, for her girls are educating admirably, and flourish away like the best at no expense at all. George is in extacy, and so is our Purgon. They all went yesterday to Lady Burghersh's great weekly assembly—a *cohue* of English who mostly looked as if they had been disgorged from the Margate Hoy. One man in corderoy breeches—*jugez du reste*. Lord Burghersh lives very handsomely, and is very popular.¹

HOTEL DE L'EUROPE, ROME, November 15, 1819.

. . . In the evening we receive most of the English whom we know in our drawing-room, and with those who dine with us we make a very pleasant assembly. Last night we had quite a true *prima sera* in the old style, which I remember so well at the Casa Corea, when my dear Father and Mother were here an hundred years ago. Chantrey, Jackson, and Canova have taken the place of Marchant, Moor, and Henson, and the old ones of her day, and the mixture of artists with others does better at Rome than it would do anywhere else, for pictures, statues, and old walls make up a great part of every one's conversation. Lord S. is amused and interested by everything, and Gonsalvi² opened all the libraries to him at the Vatican and every private and public library. Lord S. has made some extraordinary acquisitions of curiosities, which I have heard discussed over and over with an eagerness that surprises me, for the duce a bit can I recollect the names of these treasures. . . .

The Fortescues³ live at private lodgings next door

¹ Afterwards eleventh Earl of Westmorland; at this time British Minister in Florence. Lady Burghersh was a daughter of the fourth Earl of Mornington.

² Cardinal Gonsalvi, Secretary of State to the Pope.

³ Hon. George Fortescue, son of the first Earl Fortescue, born 1791, died 1877. Lady Mary, his sister, afterwards married Sir James Hamlyn-Williams.

to us. He is really delightful. He has not yet found out a bad inn in Italy, and he stops on the road where no one ever stopt before, excepting the common carriers with their mules. Poor Lady Mary, who seems not to have known that the old Romans ever existed, is obliged to go with him to every fragment of an old wall and to every broken shaft of a crumbling column, where he keeps her an hour to examine what it might have been, without a cicerone, so that he makes nothing out—but he don't care.

That witch of Endor, the Duchess of Devon,¹ has been doing mischief of another kind to that she has been doing all her life, by pretending to dig for the good of the public in the Forum. She, of course, has found nothing, but has bought up a quantity of dirt and old horrors, and will not be at the expense of carrying it away and filling it in, so that she has defaced every place where she has poked. She is the laughing-stock of all Rome with her pretensions to Mæcenas-ship. She has kept very close at home since we are come. I fancy she would rather meet the devil than any of us.

. . . Gin has arranged our escort with Count Nugent, and Gonsalvi has arranged his part of our journey. We shall have a subaltern and twelve cavalry soldiers, besides the pickets placed within sight of each other all the way to Naples. Lord Whitworth has the same, and so must every one who wishes to travel with safety and comfort. What a Government! The brigands are more numerous than ever. The other day George went with Chantrey, Anacreon Moore,² and two others, to Tivoli, and they all went armed with pistols, etc., exactly as they would had they gone into a district covered with an enemy's army. . . .

I want and languish for home news. Lord Fitzwilliam's³ affair has nearly sent us all wild. My very

¹ Elizabeth Foster, widow of the fifth Duke of Devonshire, whose first wife was Lord Spencer's sister Georgiana.

² Thomas Moore, the poet, nicknamed "Anacreon" from his translation of that author.

³ William Wentworth, second Earl Fitzwilliam, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1795. He was dismissed from the Lord-Lieutenancy of Yorkshire on account of his condemnation of the Peterloo "massacre" and his advocacy of Reform. He died in 1833.

blood boils at the conduct of the Government towards him. Sure his being turned out from the Lord-Lieutenancy so audaciously will unite every aristocrat in England to his cause! I am sure it is *cause commune* to us all. What can Grenville say to this abominable act? He is so entirely changed for the worse that he may approve of it. Althorp, I suppose, is what his father and mother are, furious—*ny plus ny moins*.

Meanwhile Lady Georgiana Quin was writing from Naples in much trepidation about the arrival of her parents. She had always been alarmed by her mother, who had snubbed her.

Lady Georgiana Quin to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

NAPLES, November, 1819.

. . . What a journey for them! *Tout d'un trait* from London to Naples? and she always writes to me as if it was merely to see me that she has undertaken it, and thinks herself another Mme. de Sévigné travelling to see Mme. de Grignan; and to make the likeness complete she calls Winny and George *mes petites entrailles*. . . .

NAPLES, November 21, 1819.

. . . Well, my dearest Sarah, you know they were to arrive yesterday. All day I was upstairs making up the fires, looking out of the window, pressing my face against the glass, and really in such a state that I shall never forget. At four my worry was almost a madness. I saw all my friends either in carriages or on horseback going by the house, I am sure in order to have a peep at the arrival. Well, at five a courier, with gold lace, cracking whip, and jingling horse, came into the yard—a postboy with him *à qui plus vite*—[with a letter from Capua to say Lady Spencer was too tired to come on that day]. . . . After a bad night I was up and dressing this morning when, at half-past ten, in rumbled a jingling carriage, and Lord G. called out, “Lord Spencer is come.” I became more dead than alive, for I thought she was there too, and I not

dressed. I hurried on everything, and came out to my own dear Father, whom I thought looking uncommonly well. We were both very nervous and horrid. He is grown bigger and fatter, and certainly older; but then he had on one of the frightfullest travelling caps I have ever beheld—a sealskin crown, with a gold band and a shade of orange-coloured binding leather lined with green. . . .

Lady Spencer was laid up at Capua in “the worst inn in Italy,” but recovered enough in a few days to go on to Naples; and her daughter writes later:

. . . To me she is kinder or more tender than anything ever was. I am much less afraid of her than I was, and I do feel so much for her; she does not exact anything more than I am happy to do for her. . . . My Father, I think, is much the most likely to enjoy himself here. He was out with the King shooting yesterday, and, though he only killed one boar and a chevreuil, and missed all his other very few shots, he came home *rayonnant* with spirits; dined before he came home, and, after dressing, he came out with me to a ball at the Spanish Ambassador’s, where he played at whist till twelve o’clock. This morning up very early, and I found him breakfasting with a grin on his face, thinking of all the letters he had been writing. There never was so happy a creature, I do believe.

George’s eye is better; he has consulted Quadri, a famous oculist here, who has ordered him fresh leeches. Poor George has in consequence been kept at home dull and alone, but, as usual, bears this and all besides like a dear humble creature, making a little moral exercise out of what to everybody else would be a trifle not thought of. He is as near perfection, I do think, as it is possible to reach to as to mind and disposition. We have long talks, as you may imagine, and I think we have taken very well to one another. My Mother is proud of him, and fond of him sometimes, according to her own mood at the moment; he is, I believe, the most truly dutiful of her children. . . .

. . . I wish you heard George trying to make my Mother submit to the society which she finds here.

Telling her how she must recollect what society she has left—only the best in Europe—for one very inferior to many others on the Continent even. Then she complains of her regret of Althorp. *Nessun maggior dolor che ricordarsi di tempi felici nella miseria*, as I said to her. Really, if this wet weather lasts, I don't know où nous donnerons de la tête.

The Countess Spencer to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

NAPLES,
December 7, 1819.

. . . MY DEARLY BELOVED GIRL,—. . . I am creeping out of my miseries, but I am still very weak; in short, I am a very shattered article, and a great many—too many—leagues from my own chimney-corner. I find thirty-three years make a great alteration in one's eyesight. Naples is as different from what I expected to find it as it is well possible to conceive it; but this difference I am fair enough to place to my account, and not to that of the place itself, which must be what it was—it is *I* who am not what I was. The misery, the filth, the stinks, the total absence of all interest, the inconceivable flatness of the society, the want of all object, and the ever-recurring nonsense of dress etiquette, and petty bickerings between the members of a small, idle, and testy *corps diplomatique* and their various compatriots, make altogether the most completely unsatisfactory ingredients from whence to form a society I ever remember; but this opinion, my dearest one, keep to yourself, for I should dislike those that are with me to know how disappointed I am with this insipid residence. . . .

After a long description of the habits of the Neapolitans as seen in the streets—

Oh England! England! dear, clean, delicate, virtuous England, catch me out of you when once I get to you! Lord S. is, thank God! gone to kill pigs with the King to-day. He is a great favourite at Court, and every day some little *douceur* proves it—sometimes ortolans, sometimes sausages made of woodcock, sometimes pheasants, sometimes fresh butter,

arrive *de la part du Roi*; but above all the general invitations to join La Caccia del Re compleat the business, and Lord S. may perhaps end his life as Grand Veneur to Ferdinand I Gin longs to introduce George to her society. She goes everywhere, and greatly enjoys it, and the people like a genuine young one. Nothing can be more exactly what I wish her than she is—not the least affected or conceited. To be sure, [against] the advantage which she has derived from living in a great deal of society must be placed the disadvantage of every other life which she is likely to live either at home or abroad appearing dull and tedious after this. However, I am thoroughly grateful to Almighty Goodness for finding her what I do. Lord G. is extremely improved in manner by living in so much society; in other respects he is what he was, and what Nature made him, and what he must ever be. Nothing can live together better than they do. . . .

NAPLES,
January 5, 1820.

. . . It appears to me that I have been a terrible long time since I wrote to my darling; but I have been but a poor creature. I have really had but a slow recovery, and I have really had no heart to set about anything. However, I will begin again, and you shall have a good *cause* from your poor old Mother. Lord S. has been for these last eleven days at Persano, where he continues to be in very high favor. The old King is as attentive and kind as possible; but they have had no sport, and it has blown a hurricane of sirocco, and it has poured a deluge ever since they have been there, so that, tho' they have found no boar outside the house, the bore within has been unspeakable. However, Lord S. likes it, and remains, thank God! seven days more—sixteen days. You'll say: "Why are you so glad?" Because, bad as *le passe-temps* is there, it is better than the destructive *ennuy* at Naples, beyond any expression the most detestable residence I ever was in; but I won't begin on that subject, for there is no end to it.

My brother came hither yesterday, and as lame as ever; but surely anyone able to perform the journey from Milan to Naples in ninety hours,

which he did, can't be very ill. His spirits are overcoming. He has not yet been able to get a lodging here, so I have put up his travelling bed in one of the drawing-rooms till he gets one. So full is Naples of geese who have flocked to it. Not one of whom have I ever seen, or ever wish to see, being all such as you see vomited out of the steam-vessel upon Ramsgate or Margate piers.

England is just now in a state when the most indifferent must be anxious about it. I should not be surprized if the Government contrived at last to blow up actual rebellion by their execrable measures and by their violence.¹ Those genuine rats, the Grenvilles, I dare say, have given them courage to do all they have done, for of themselves they were too timid to take such outrageous measures. I am sure I am happy for one that we have fairly got rid of Lord Grenville and Charles Wynn.² As friends I shall always be glad to cultivate them; but I am heartily glad that we are no longer mixed up with their rank Toryism, and that their politicks and ours are fairly and distinctly separated. I expect every post to hear of their having accepted of large and profitable places for the good of their country.

I was so delighted with Jack's [Lord Althorp] speech in Parliament that I could afford to have a large dash of regret thrown into my cup by his appearing along with Hobhouse³ and such-like at Covent Garden. I must hear of better reasons than just now occur to me before I can think well of such a fellowship. . . .

¹ The Cato Street plot to blow up the Ministers was discovered in February of this year.

² The Right Hon. Charles Watkin Williams Wynn (1775-1850) was Lord Grenville's nephew.

³ John Cam Hobhouse, afterwards Lord Broughton. His opinions were too "Radical" to please Lady Spencer.

CHAPTER IX

1820-1823

THE death of George III., on January 29, 1820, and the accession of the Prince Regent to the throne, brought into acute prominence the quarrel between George IV. and his wife, Caroline of Brunswick. The marriage had never been a happy one, and had been contracted in a great measure to pay the Prince's debts. Since 1814 the Princess had lived abroad, but had not been recognized by H.B.M. Ambassadors, and her conduct had been closely watched for some years. On June 6, 1820, the very day on which the Queen returned to England to claim the rights of Queen Consort, Lord Liverpool opened an inquiry into her position, in the House of Lords.

In July he introduced a Bill to deprive her of all her privileges as Queen, and to dissolve her marriage, but owing to dwindling majorities this measure was dropped. In the following session, Parliament granted the Queen an annuity of £50,000. This and the Coronation of George IV. form the principal topics of the following chapter.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

June 7, 1820.

. . . One great piece of public news I can tell you, which is that the Queen is arrived—came yesterday to London openly to declare war against her enemies

and their malicious designs ; and she has been received, as all the King's enemies should be, by the Government, who have filled two enormous green bags with evidence of her guilt, and have laid them before Parliament. The country is all for the Queen. But she is to be tried ; whether by Parliament or by a court of justice nobody knows yet. The Opposition think the ministers have been silly about her and her concerns, and so do I. But what is to come of it all is another question. If I was the King I think I should have died out of the way very quietly, with mere worry. . . .

Althorp has just been here, and he says he thinks they¹ will not come to-day, as no letter has arrived yet. I am so nervous and hustled at the thought of their coming that really I feel half afraid of going mad. . . .

PUTNEY,
July 24, 1820.

. . . My Father and Mother have been spending a fortnight at Althorp. They return in two days, to wait at Wimbledon till the Queen's fate is decided in the House of Lords. The debates on it began the 17th of August, and the ministerial people are very sanguine about proving her guilt conclusively. Everybody agrees in believing her to be guilty, except the very lowest classes ; but really ministers and their master have so completely bungled the business that it forces everyone who has the least sense of justice to appear to take her part in many things. He [George IV.] is so unpopular, his private character so despised, and everything he does so injudicious as well as unprincipled that one can hardly wish him well out of it, except for the fear of a revolution. There are some good caricatures about the business. One is a vast pair of scales ; on one side is the Queen, alone, with nothing but a scrap of paper, inscribed "public opinion." And she is down, fast to the ground, while on the other side is the King, of an enormous size, and kicking the beam ; all the ministers tugging at the scale he is in, to pull it down ; but nothing will do, he will kick the beam. John Bull stands between,

¹ Lord and Lady Spencer.



Princess of Wales, Caroline, and the Marchioness Townshend

Jo

Princess (Caroline) of Wales, just after her marriage

PRINCESS OF WALES, CAROLINE, AND THE MARCHIONESS TOWNSHEND.

From a drawing by Lavinia, Countess Spencer.

To face p. 224.

swearing "I'll see fair play." That gives a perfect history of the state of the country. . . .

Mr. Lyttelton soon after went to "Harrowgate" to take the waters. His account of the place and of the life there is very unlike the Harrogate of to-day.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

QUEEN'S HEAD,
September 15, 1820.

. . . To-day I am to leave this upper region and go and lodge hard by the spring, in a sort of Rotten Row, just above where the eggs are perpetually steaming. Upon the whole it will be nearer the waters. I am told by old Harrowgaters that in cold weather one is very uncomfortable here. You see we are open to a great bleak common, with no ground above us, and nothing that even looks comfortable, for the common is bounded with *black* fir. With the exception of a couple of sycamores before their house and some half-grown elms round the chapel in the middle of the heath, there is no other wood in view. The heath is near a mile long and a quarter broad, and has a race-course in a ring in the centre of it, which gives one an excellent galloping ground at all times. The heath at one end narrows off like the angle of a lake, and here High Harrowgate has most the appearance of a village, the cottages standing in rows on each side. But both here and below the buildings are generally very much detached, and you seldom see more than four or five together. The great inns, of which there are four on the heath, are at good distances from each other, and altogether it is one of the most struggling places that can be imagined. As for the inns, they are all in both places on the same plan, each having, besides a billiard table for subscribers in a little building close adjacent, a long room for the ordinary, where some forty or fifty may easily dine, and a very large and lofty assembly room with an orchestra, where they dance almost every night, and play cards or back-gammon, and breakfast at several little tables, and muster to luncheon and to

tea under a president in the evening. The president being (this at least is the rule of the ordinary) the oldest resident in the house, and the *Vice* the last comer. The president also officiates as M.C. at the balls and hops. Balls there are alternately at all the chief inns, and you see cards on the chimney-piece of the great room at the others—"The Ladies and Gents at the — present Compts and beg, etc., the Ladies and Gents at the — to a Ball." I have not been yet to one of these, but I think I shall the next time there is one at the Crown, which is the most frequented of the inns *là-bas*, so as to see the humours.

There is a scarcity of anything like real gentlemen, the company consisting chiefly of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and other squires, many of whom come here with their wives and daughters a pleasuring, and there are also many persons of a yet inferior rank at the ordinaries. At one of the inns on the heath—the Granby—there is almost always, so the doctor tells me, a strong colony of Irish, sent here for their health, and I suppose joined by a few of those Hibernians who are always to be found at all the watering places. Add to them a sprinkling of mere rural dandies, and you have a fairish notion of the society in this *hill-gant* place. I think it is unaccountably bad upon the whole, and so it must have been for some time past, for I have looked over one or two lists, and have not seen a single name even that I knew; nor is there anybody here that I ever saw before except Mr. Beresford, the late Archbishop of Tuam's son, whom I caught a glimpse of a day or two ago. All this does by no means disconcert me, as I had rather much be alone than be involved in constant talk with the Lord knows who. Nevertheless I always exchange civilities with all the Long Roomians whenever we meet, and there is infinite courtesy passes between us at dinner, when I do unbend, you know, naturally a little, and—I have had luck in my neighbours, and in these last days got a good deal of interesting and I think authentic information about Manchester from a great cotton-printer who sat next me—a very plain-sailing, honest sort of a man, with the good manners that good sense always gives, though he has risen absolutely from nothing. . . .

MR. SHUTT'S, LOW HARROWGATE,
September 16, 1820.

. . . I am established in my new quarters. It is, I assure you, a very tidy little room I am now writing in, fronting the south-east and looking out upon a neat little flower garden, bounded by a low stone wall which divides us from a narrow road, along which pass at least a hundred foot-passengers for one horseman or carriage. Young untrimmed hedge-row trees beyond, between whose stems you look upon green fields interspersed with houses, and a moving scene upon the cross roads which intersect them at a little distance. . . .

Here follows a minute description of his lodgings and of each piece of furniture. He ends up with a quotation from Clarendon, whose exile from his wife and children he compares with his own.

HARROWGATE,
September 26, 1820.

. . . You have given me a considerable batch of politics, and I thank you for it, for I must not turn my thoughts away from that subject, though God knows I hate it so heartily that I think I should be glad to live in one of the South Sea Islands for the rest of my days if I might never hear more of Kings, Queens, Radicals, Tories, Mobs, Soldiers, Addresses, rascally and foolish speeches, etc., etc. (Of one or two of the great Whigs I should always think with admiration and reverence.) Such are my present feelings. I doubt whether they will ever change except to gain fresh strength; but to be sure it is not likely that any future period should be more fertile in all manner of public follies, vices, and crimes than that through which we are now passing. The whole is at once disgusting and alarming in the extreme; nor is there any other substantial ground of comfort than that we have no abiding place here. . . .

A report had got about that Captain R. C. Spencer had been killed in a duel with his first officer on his

own quarterdeck at Buenos Ayres. There was no truth at all in the story, though the evidence appeared so convincing that his family felt forced to believe it, with the exception of Lord Althorp, who steadfastly denied that his brother could have been guilty of such a breach of discipline.

*The Hon. George Spencer to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

ALTHORP,
October 20, 1820.

. . . They have sent Bob copies of all the letters which were received on the subject, that he may know on what grounds the report was believed, for he might indeed complain if such a rascally business was believed about him on slight foundation. As it is, the astonishment of everyone in England, and the interest that was shewn by all ranks that knew him personally or only by name, sufficiently shew how different his character is amongst us from anything like what would be inferred from this transaction, and in that point of view the result of the thing is satisfactory enough. Duncannon says he was in the House of Lords when Lord Melville first came there with the contradiction in his pocket, and that the noise was so great of the questions that were about it all around the house that the proceedings of the Queen's trial were quite stopped, and order was obliged to be enforced to make them go on. Since that time the bags full of congratulatory letters that have been received and still are coming are quite marvellous, and very amusing it is to see the way that different neat turns are made in them upon this perfectly fresh and unbewritten sort of subject. Rogers, etc., quote the story of the son that "was lost and is found, that was dead and is alive;" and in that view of the subject they have taken the occasion of killing three oxen to give away here by way of the fatted calf.¹

¹ It was Lady Spencer's plan—"in commemoration of our late deliverance from grief," wrote Lady Sarah. "Four fat oxen and many gallons of ale and loaves of bread were given to sixteen

Mrs. Thibet's¹ feelings on the subject you must hear. She answered the enquiries of a lady at Wimbledon Gate: "Why Lord, Ma'am, they tarabusted us about his being dead, and now they are tarabusting us about his being come to life again; and there's Mr. Venables gone to town without waiting for the [*illegible*], and nobody knows what's to become of all the mourning. Well, God help us all, I say." That speech gives one a good notion, tho', of the confusion the family was in one way and another about it. . . .

We have just finished the exercise of the Yeomanry, in which I played a most distinguished part as cornet. Three days ago the troops dined here in the gallery in number 190, and very well it answered. We all had to make speeches, etc., till they drank and sang themselves completely up, and ended by chairing Althorp and me out to the top of the stair-case, we alone having sat them out to the end. The only fatal event was Harris's elder brother, in a sudden encounter with his neighbour, having his head knocked thro' a window, and then passing the night on straw in the stable, in which last situation, however, he was not without companions. . . . Blomfield² has got a living in London, so large that he has given up pupils, and, with Chesterfield, has a clear £5,000 a year. He will soon be a Bishop, I have no doubt.

hundred poor people from the neighbouring villages. It was a most overcoming thing, to hear the poor people assembled after the reception of the gift (which they carried home in baskets to their families), and after being refreshed by a pint of ale and bread and cheese besides, give three times three cheers to Captain Spencer's life and prosperity. After the cheering had ceased, we were all sobbing like fools at the open hall door. A very poor stout man from the middle of the crowd looked straight at my father's pale face and said, 'God bless you! You will have the blessings of the poor upon your death-bed!' I assure you I can hardly even now write that speech."

¹ The lodge-keeper at the gate of Wimbledon Park on the Portsmouth Road. The name "Thibet's Lodge" survived into the seventies, long after the Park had been broken up.

² Afterwards Bishop of London. He had been George Spencer's tutor.

The next letter shows the intolerance of the pre-Reform Bill days, when it was unheard of for a man not of the "Landed Gentry" to stand for the county.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

HARROWGATE,
October 16, 1820.

. . . Oh, Boroughbridge reminds me of Dick Spooner, who (have you heard it?) has given the last touch to his Brummidgum impudence by actually standing for the County of Warwick on the resignation of Sir Charles Mordaunt. Mordaunt is very ill, and I suppose this will send him without more delay out of the world with a groan that the whole county will hear. But was there anything like such impudence? Is there in all the records of Knights of the Shire, putting John Wilkes and Middlesex out of the question, any example of such a fellow with his plated spurs? There are, I know, a great many Warwickshire freeholders in Birmingham, but I cannot imagine that Birmingham can carry the county, if Ugly Dick had them all. I shall be curious to see what will happen. . . .

Birmingham did not "carry the county," for Mr. Francis Lawley¹ was returned for Warwickshire on November 4.

NETHERBY,
October 22, 1820.

. . . Nothing can be more charming than the young people of this family. The boys are not here, but the perfect innocence and sweetness of temper and disposition of the girls make a scene indescribably pleasing, and the thorough friendliness and boyish playfulness of Sir James² and the infinite kindness

¹ Afterwards Sir Francis Lawley, Bart.

² Sir James Graham, first baronet, married Lady Catherine Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Galloway. James, the eldest son, afterwards second baronet, the eminent statesman, married Fanny Callander, daughter of Sir James Callander, of Ardkinglas, in 1819. She died in 1857 and he in 1861.

and goodness of Lady Catherine compose altogether a most beautiful whole. The eldest son lives in a farmhouse within a mile of the mansion, that has been altered and fitted up in a very pretty and gentleman-like way. He is a thorough good fellow, his wife is a very slight delicate thing, and I fear for her health, and think it certain that her beauty, which is chiefly bloom and fine teeth, will not last long. I think you would call her a nice creature.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

ALTHORP,
October 30, 1820.

MY DEAREST FRITZ,—. . . As to your hopes from the coronation promotion, alas they are very groundless! No coronation, nor festivities, nor promotions are in fashion just now truly! If we do but keep tolerably safe from revolutions, massacres, or ruin, we ought to be thankful enough. . . .

Althorp don't come back here, but expects to be obliged to attend the House of Commons, which meets the 23rd November; if indeed the Bill to degrade the Queen is not thrown out by the House of Lords first, which people of all sides seem to be growing to wish. If after all they do condemn her, great riots are to be expected; the whole mob is for her. And immense processions are constantly going up from different sets of people, carrying her *addresses* — fifty open carriages in a string filled with women of the lowest class, both as to rank and character, all dressed out in tawdry silks, old plumes of feathers, white gloves and bare shoulders, went to kiss her hand almost every day while the weather was fine, attended by ten thousand people on foot, choking up Piccadilly and covering the road to Hammersmith. This was early in her trial. But now it is closed they say many people of the highest rank, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Fitzwilliam at their head, will go and leave their names, to shew they think her deserving of acquittal and protection. Her trial has been carried on by the most infamous means—spies, wretches of the meanest kind, bribed and perjured over and over, have been called by the persecutors—and her long life of bar-

barous ill-usage from her *natural protector* gives a strong bias in her favour.

My Father is very lucky to be out of it. Having been excused attending because of Bob's *death* at the beginning, he can't now vote, and so need not attend. If the Bill, the great ministerial measure, is thrown out by the House of Lords, a change of Ministers is expected—perhaps without sufficient reason. But certainly the present Ministers will behave oddly if they stay in in that case. I always *wish*, like a baby, for a change, merely for the *fun* of it. It would I know divert me quite beyond anything else, perhaps not altogether creditably, to see the scrambling and jolting, and squabbling and wriggling for places, among our own *particular* friends; and I have often amused myself with fancying Althorp, and Lord Milton, and Mr. Tierney, and Duncannon, and Mr. Macdonald, and all the *levée* as *ministers of state*. Well, I'm afraid it ain't going to happen. . . .

*The Hon. George Spencer to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

ALTHORP,
November 21, 1820.

. . . Our country here is very much improved in the shooting way; but not so I myself, for I am decidedly a greater tailor than I was last year I was in England. However, I go on hoping for the best. The greatest (day?) we have had here was on Harleston Heath, 100 head, and in Nobottle Wood 92, in both of which, with tolerable shooting, half as much more must have been killed; it is the first bag in this country that has ever amounted to three figures. As for hunting, of course it has not been in my way to get any. . . . Sir Bellingham Graham,¹ who keeps the hounds, and is a gay man himself, has attracted here a host of dandies, and one must dress for the covert-side as carefully as for Almack's; the Golden Ball² is here himself this season, and goes to covert with his party every morn-

¹ Sir Bellingham Graham (1790-1806), seventh baronet of Norton Conyers, Yorkshire.

² One Hughes, a well-known dandy of the day, known as "Golden Ball Hughes." He died in penury.

ing in a coach-and-four. . . . You seemed to be in expectation of promotion at the time of the coronation ; you will have heard before now there has been none, nor is it likely that there will be as long as the immaculate Queen Caroline blesses us with her presence.¹ . . . The country is becoming a little quieter again after the Queen's trial, but I am greatly afraid of the meeting of Parliament again next spring, for the House of Commons will be [illegible] with the subject. It would be all worth while to have gone through this rumpus for us, and I think for the country, if the Ministers had thought it right to go out in consequence of it, but they seem to have the least possible intention of doing so.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

ALTHORP,
January 1, 1821.

. . . Well, my date will tell you what we are about —making a merry Christmas : Billiards, rockets, Pope Joan, Mr. Rogers² good jokes and stories, and plenty of boar's head and Christmas pyes within doors, and shooting away out of doors, killing the old crowded season as need be. The Bessboroughs, and William Ponsonby and Lady Bab, the Elchos, Georgiana Bingham, Duncannons, Sir H. and Lady Davy, Sir William and Lady Gordon, Vernons, Mr. Grenville, Heber, Colonel Shawe, Mr. Fazakerly, the Abercrombys, Mr. Freemantle, Mr. Dibdin, Petrie, Dr. Copleston³ (a new man *here*, but an old friend of *ours*, from Oxford), and I dare say many more I have forgotten, make up our past, present, and future party. It does very well. Everybody here is most justly delighted with our new cousin, Lord Elcho ;⁴ a more

¹ In July, 1820, a Bill of pains and penalties against Queen Caroline was introduced in the House of Lords, but owing to diminishing majorities in its favour, it was abandoned. The Commons voted the Queen an annuity of £50,000, but she died on August 7, 1821.

² Samuel Rogers, the poet-banker.

³ Dr. Copleston, then Provost of Oriel College, Oxford ; afterwards Bishop of Llandaff.

⁴ Afterwards eighth Earl of Wemyss, married Lady Louisa Bingham. Georgiana Bingham was her sister.

thoroughly manly, frank, unaffected, and gentleman-like young man I never saw. And he is, by his character and his affection, alike worthy of his wife—which is saying everything, for she is a most truly lovely creature, in person, in mind, and in manner. Her health is delicate, and they have but one child.¹ Georgiana Bingham is *exceedingly* improved. She has grown very handsome, and has lost her affectation by some miracle.²

*The Hon. George Spencer to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

March, 1821.

The Prattery are just come to town. Brecknock³ is much the same as ever, as good-natured, and the most sensible and clever of the family; but they have not melted him down at all. He constantly attends the debates in Parliament, and is, I suppose, educated as for Prime Minister by Lord Camden. He is [*illegible*] himself, and would rather be a good country gentleman. Althorp is living in his old rooms in the Albany. He has been very eager in politics this year on committees, and in making motions of his own, etc. He has not, I am happy to say, had anything to do with the Queen, like many others of the same party. . . .

April 21, 1821.

. . . I have been employed for the last month in learning Hebrew. I have also been attending various publick lectures at the College of Surgeons and the Royal Institution; but not in a very regular manner, as I've not had time to study. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 12, 1821.

. . . I do not know whether Sarah will have told you of Georgiana Bingham's going to be married to a Mr. Nevill, of Neville Holt. The acquaintance and

¹ The present Earl of Wemyss (1912).

² George Spencer says in his diary for this Christmas that he played battledore and shuttlecock with Lady Georgiana, and kept it up to 2,120 hits!

³ Afterwards second Marquis Camden; born 1799, died 1866.

proposal were made at Ashfordby, a hunting-house which the Elchos lived in last winter. Elcho says he is a very gentleman-like man, and when his old father dies will be pretty well off. The only misfortune is that he is a Catholic, but I dare say they will do vastly well together, and it is a very good thing for the poor girl to be married, and no longer to depend upon her sisters, one after the other, to give her lodging. . . . You must also be informed that Brecknock is in Parliament for a snug borough of Ludgershall, which Lord Camden has bought for him. . . .

The Coronation of George IV. was fixed to take place on July 19, and Queen Caroline insisted on being crowned also. On the appointed day she presented herself at the doors of Westminster Abbey, but was refused admittance.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

PUTNEY,
July 4, 1821.

. . . All the circle are vastly well; my Father is in such good spirits about himself that he means to *walk* among the other Peers in the Procession at the Coronation, if it takes place. Nobody, however, seriously seems to expect that festivity to take place at all: the mob are rather too cross, and too fond of the Queen to be allowed to witness a pomp and ceremony in which she is *not* to take a part; and they will make some bustle on the occasion; we are all in a fright about it. As it is they make bustle enough; every day there is a gathering on some account or other. And Her Gracious Majesty takes care to keep it up, by showing herself all about London in a shabby post-chaise and pair of *post-horses*, and living in the scrubbiest house she could think of, to *show* she is kept out of the Palaces. Nothing ever was like the absurdity of the Ministers' conduct towards her—that is, they have complied with every wild fancy of the King's; he has certainly lost his head on the subject, and rather than *go out* they do everything he orders when he is in a real fury and rage. He was contra-

dicted by Sir Benjamin Bloomfield t'other day, and he seized him by the collar, and gave him a good *hearty shake*. So one must not wonder if he ain't often contradicted . . .

*The Hon. George Spencer to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

THE COMMISSIONER'S YACHT,

SPITHEAD,

July 14, 1821.

. . . The Coronation is now all the talk in England, and poor Bonaparte's¹ death hardly engaged anybody's thoughts or conversation for one day even, tho' seven or eight years ago it would have surprised anybody to be told that it would be an event of such insignificance. My Father intends to walk in the procession, and he has appointed me his waiter at the dinner at Westminster Hall, as each peer is allowed to take one in, so I shall see that part of the show to perfection, and it is better worth seeing than what will take place in the Abbey. What is of most concern to me about it at present is the procuring my dress, for we also are to make part of the show. I am only to have, I understand, a plain red coat with a blue sash, and red rosettes on my shoes, so there will be many people greater monkeys than I. Brecknock, for instance, if anyone of his portly dimensions can be called a monkey, is to be one of the King's train-bearers, and they are to be decked out with more gay colours and nicety than anybody. It is to be hoped he will hold his fingers tight whilst in the performance of his office, for the King's robes are of such immense weight in gold, that he would infallibly tumble backwards with his gouty legs, if they were ever left for half a minute to his own shoulders. . . .

It was sixty years since the last Coronation, and the interest caused by the ceremony was great. In George Spencer's diary occurs the entry a few days before: "My father put on his robes, and was looked at by a room full of ladies and gentlemen."

¹ He had died on May 5.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

BROOKS'S,
Sunday morning, July 20, 1821.

. . . On the said show I shall not dilate, seeing that my description, to be anything at all complete, would fill two octavos, but of all magnificent and affecting spectacles that ever were beheld, I do think that of yesterday as a whole was the most so. The King was apparently much oppressed, and often was much affected, but did all with much grace and dignity. Royal dukes very sorry performers, and ill-looking fellows indeed. Leopold¹ grave and majestic. The other K.G., Lord Londonderry, stately and conscious of it. By-the-bye, their dress had a finer effect than any other. The Archbishop's² sermon not in my opinion quite admonitory enough, but on the whole uncourtly enough to astonish the foreigners and displease the courtiers. It was very slowly and clearly delivered, so as to be audible afar, and he laid at least as much stress upon the lecturing as on the flattering parts. . . .

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

RYDE,
July 21, 1821.

. . . The King's health and strength since (the Coronation) are astonishing. He certainly consists of iron and cable ropes, and the Duke of York may give up all expectation of enduring his crowning for many a long year. His Majesty on his return home at night on the Coronation day was stopped for twenty minutes by a crowd of carriages, two of which were overturned, and could not therefore have made way for Alexander the Great himself. To extricate the royal carriage from this difficulty, it was proposed to take a by-road through some market gardens.³ It was done, and Lord St. Helens and two or three other grandees followed the King, along such a rough

¹ Prince Leopold, afterwards King of the Belgians, who had married Princess Charlotte.

² Charles Manners Sutton.

³ This happened near Milbank.

broken up old cart lane as never was trod by King before. In the middle of the progress they came to a broad deep canal, full of water and mud, over which lay an old wooden bridge, stopped up at its entrance by strong barricadoes. Another full stop! But the guards knocked down the barricadoes, and the King's first and then all the other carriages got safe over the bridge. Lord St. Helens,¹ who told my father the story, said he never was so frightened, for the planks cracked, shook, bent, and were all in great holes. However they got over. Immediately after, the owner of the bridge *accourut*, to stop the King from attempting to cross it, and on being told he was too late, very near fainted away. The bridge had been *for many years condemned as impassably dangerous*, surveyors having so reported it, and no workman with a wheelbarrow had been permitted to pass over it since the decree was passed. What do you think of this escape? Never was a monarch so lucky certainly. He must have been drowned if the bridge had given way. . . .

*Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. R.
Spencer.*

WIMBLEDON,
September 28, 1821.

. . . The King is travelling about, as the papers will tell you. He was most popular and happy in Ireland; Pat never was so overjoyed before. All classes and kinds and sects were loyal at once. A poor fellow would climb up and stick fast behind H.M.'s coach on some one of his public *entrées* into Dublin. The Guards and footmen were for turning him off, and the row it made drew the King's attention. He looked out, and seeing the strange figure he had got by way of a guard of honour, he laughed very good-humouredly, and putting out his hand, shook hands with the man; upon which the man waved his hand over his head in an ecstasy, bellowing out in an atrocious brogue—"Here's the hand that will never be washed!" And no doubt the vow is kept. . . .

¹ Alleyne Fitzherbert, at this time a Lord of the Bedchamber, a diplomatist of some repute. He was created Baron St. Helens in 1801, and died in 1839.

*The Hon. George Spencer to Captain the Hon.
Frederick Spencer.*

WISETON,
October 2, 1821.

... Althorp is more eager than ever after his present hobby of cows, sheep, and pigs, and enjoys nothing so much as a day spent in handling them. It is to be sure the best employment for anybody who lives so much alone as he does, for nothing else can make out of doors work for every day in the year, and accordingly I never knew any person who knew as well how to get on by himself, without being more or less unfitted for society. I wish he would marry tho', for his own and all our sakes, but I am convinced he is as much determined against that as ever. He says he lives alone more comfortably as he grows older, but I do not think he will find his account in it when he really grows positively old. . . .

Lord Althorp never married again, and after his wife's death gave up hunting, and always wore a black coat in the evening. It is said that coloured coats went out of fashion after Lord Lytton's "Pelham" was published in 1828, in which he makes his dandy hero say that black is the only colour for a gentleman to wear in the evening.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

STANFORD COURT,¹
October 15, 1821.

... There was a plan for going a-wild-buck-hunting this morning, but it has come to nothing, owing to the non-appearance yesterday at dinner (for the second time of bilking us) of the Rev. Francis Winnington, Master of the Buck and Hare and I believe Badger Hounds. This gentleman is the wonder of the whole neighbourhood, and distress of his family, from the strangeness of his habits. He lives almost in perfect

¹ Stanford Court, Worcestershire, belonging to Sir Thomas Winnington.

solitude, doing nothing but hunt or look at or buy or exchange horses, and having no books even in his house, but the "Elegant Extracts"—a collection of hunting songs—and the Bible.

Monday Night.—The above account of Rev. F. W. is not exaggerated, yet in society (for we have had him here this evening) he is not so taciturn as he used to be, and is rather pleasant from some originality of manner, and sense enough if one can get it out. . . .

*The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Captain the Hon.
Frederick Spencer.*

ALTHORP,
January 1, 1822.

MY DEAR FRITZ,—Althorp is here, in much better health than he has had for many years, owing to prescriptions and rules of a Dr. Scudamore's, who put him upon a sensible, plain, but nourishing diet,¹ which he has kept to now for five months. He is allowed six glasses of wine, but he scarce drinks any at all. He has had no cold nor any ailment at all for a long time, and can ride forty-five miles *on end* without fatigue. He says he thinks he is as strong as ever again. He looks uncommonly well, and quite sufficiently *fat*, by my faith! and yet within these three months he has lost sixteen pounds weight, which he rejoices at much, and reckons as one of his best symptoms.

Well, I have just been down to see the New Year *eat in* by all the boys and girls, and rare beef and pudding, gobbling it as usual. Your *likeness*, little George,² is now a fine-grown boy of his age, and has very good health and a fine colour, and what is much better, is a fine little fellow in his disposition, which is very open and good.

We have the Poyntzes here, just arrived, all *in statu*

¹ Lord Althorp dieted himself to such an extent, for fear of getting fat, that he used to weigh out a very small portion of food for breakfast, and being as hungry after eating it as he was before, would at once leave the room for fear of yielding to temptation and exceeding his limit.

² Mr. Lyttelton's eldest son, afterwards fourth Lord Lyttelton of the second creation (1817-1876).

quo. Bella¹ very pretty still, and bidding fair to continue so as long as anybody. As to the eldest,² I fear that *single* blessedness, which surely is less than *double*, will be her lot, good though she is, and sure to be a perfect wife.

The melancholy and tedious affair of poor Lady Bessborough's³ funeral is but just over. You have heard that she was brought all the way from Italy to be buried at her request next her sister in the Cavendish vault at Derby. It would have been wiser, and kinder, not to have made any such request, and the moral I draw from it is, that sentiment is neither good feeling nor sound principle. But enough of that. . . .

Admiral Colpoys is just come from Halifax in thirteen days. The shortest passage, I suppose, ever known. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton

PORTSMOUTH,
January 28, 1822.

. . . We dined yesterday at Sir J. Whitehead's in the royal presence of the Duke of Clarence,⁴ who to our astonishment behaved perfectly well, was civil to everybody, even gentlemanlike in his manner, did not say a single indecent or improper thing. Bob and I can hardly believe it now, on recollection. He brought his son, Lieut. FitzClarence,⁵ to go on board Clifford's ship. Could not judge of him, but his looks were not much in his favour; a strange sort of slouching eyelid to one of his eyes, and vast pouch-like chops proved that H.R.H. was more to blame than Mrs. Jordan. There was a Miss FitzClarence⁶ there too, much more like her mother—indeed, a fine-looking, brown girl,

¹ Afterwards Marchioness of Exeter.

² In 1830 this Miss Poyntz married Frederick Spencer, to whom the letter was addressed.

³ Sister of Lord Spencer and Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

⁴ Afterwards William IV.

⁵ Afterwards Admiral Lord Adolphus FitzClarence (1802-1856).

⁶ Mary, eldest daughter of William IV. and Mrs. Jordan; married Charles Fox, son of Lord Holland, in 1824.

with a pleasant countenance and manners. This is the damsel they say young Charles Fox wanted to marry. . . .

*The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

WIMBLEDON PARK,
June 4, 1822.

. . . Bob sailed for Copenhagen on Sunday the 26th, and had good winds, we believe, to take him across; and if Sir G. Naylor and his Garter are quickly received by his Gothic Majesty, there is a probability of the two Captains being on English terra firma again in another fortnight. You see, first the Petersburg part of the plan, then the Stockholm, were abandoned but your Father has had quite pleasure enough, tho' he was very eager at one time about Petersburg. Pleasure enough however he undoubtedly has had, and pleasure where nobody else could have found it. Pleasure in rolling at anchor for a week. Pleasure in beating up for I don't know how many days in a fog and east wind, and, in short, pleasure in everything, of course, in all agreeable things and events, and, by a patent peculiar to himself, in all disagreeable ones too, that could possibly happen at sea. He has evidently been a great comfort to Bob, especially when that very excellent and high-minded, but somewhat irascible Commander was plagued and half insulted by certain very impertinent passengers of the Envoy's train ("measuring the bed-places" and "blackguarding one hull down," are the Captain's expressions), and when his whole cabin was full of screamers, women and children, and odious lubbers. Then it was, said Bob, that your Father was the cheerfulness, the pleasantest, and the bravest creature on board, and his last words about him were that he looked to him for comfort, and to *repose upon* whenever he should be bored, etc., in the passage. Is not it a fine thing, now, to have such a Father at (sea) as well as on shore—in short, everywhere? And so much for the chief of the family!

News! I don't know that everything is not *in statu quo*. . . . As to public affairs, God knows there (is) enough that is seriously bad, especially the condition

of the poor Irish. Lord Lucan, who, by the way, has been here, and in high feather, for some weeks, had a letter from Castlebar the other day, in which his agent told him that there were thousands, *ten or eleven*, upon his estates who literally had not a morsel to eat. It is evidently a real famine! I don't suppose that any such sad suffering has been known in modern times in Europe, unless in besieged towns. As the evil must to a great extent have been foreseen, so it ought to have been provided against and might, but the conduct of the Government and the principal people in the country has been unaccountably bad in not doing anything to relieve the distress, and now it is impossible, let us subscribe as we may, and heap up money and provisions to send relief in time to a great proportion of the sufferers. As to England, the distress of our farmers increases, and in some counties, especially Sussex and Suffolk, many farms are thrown back upon the landlords' hands, and the occupiers ruined, and no new tenants to be got upon any terms. It is difficult to say where this will stop. I don't know what the prospect is for another year. As for general politics, all is just as it was : the Ministry feeble, the Grenvilles odious, the Opposition inefficient, except now and then for pulling down a tax, or abolishing a sinecure, which is rather done by the country than by them. There has been a great cry for Parliamentary Reform, and the question has gained ground, but I don't think it will ever be carried quietly, and *I* don't reckon it worth the risk of a violent change.

We have one or two very entertaining new books, especially two by *Americans*. One is a novel—"The Spy"¹—another, a new book of the author of the "Sketch Book"²—"Bracebridge Hall." But what's the use of talking of these to a man ten thousand miles off? Come home, then, Master Fritz! And now good-bye. . . .

George Spencer took Orders this year. Early in October the Bishop of Peterborough told him that he would hold an ordination in December, and Mr. Spencer wrote to the Diocesan Examiner to ask what

¹ By Fenimore Cooper.

² By Washington Irving.

books he was to read and how he was to prepare. The reply came that, as far as he, the examiner, was concerned, "it is impossible that I could ever entertain any idea of subjecting a gentleman with whose talents and good qualities I am so well acquainted as I am with yours, to any examination except one as a matter of form, for which a verse in the Greek Testament and an Article of the Church of England returned into Latin will be amply sufficient. With regard to the doctrinal part of the examination, that is taken by the Bishop himself, but it is confined entirely to the prepared questions, which are a test of opinions, not of scholarship. . . ."

"I really am unable to say whether the Bishop of Peterboro' requires a certificate of the Divinity Lectures or not, but I know he does not in all cases make it a *sine qua non*. . . ."

It is not very surprising after a letter like this that, being of a morbidly conscientious and introspective turn of mind, George Spencer found the Church of England unsatisfying. For some years he continued Rector of Brington, working hard among the people, but always with recurring doubts, till at length he resigned his living and became a Roman Catholic in December, 1830, three years before Keble preached the Assize sermon which started the Oxford Movement.

*The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Captain the Hon.
F. Spencer.*

ALTHORP,
January 4, 1823.

Everything has been prospering much, including the shooting. The chief occurrence has been George's taking Orders and beginning to serve his Church and look after his parish; and I do give you my word that no one ever started fairer in

that sacred profession, of which so few are worthy, especially at his age. Then it turns out he is an excellent reader and preacher, and his first sermon, which was in great part his own writing, was a very good one. Your Father and Mother are very much pleased, and between you and me I think the latter's being so, and her hearing all the world speak with *respect* of Hodge, is of great consequence to Hodge's future happiness in his intercourse with her.

The respect and awe with which the parental opinion was regarded is shown by an allusion in the same letter. Frederick Spencer had just been through some business transaction, and had asked his brother-in-law how it had been taken by his parents. Mr. Lyttelton replies :

. . . I saw your Father at Ryde, and combining the manner of his letters to Bob on the first intelligence with his general manner in speaking of your promotion afterwards, I have not a particle of doubt but that he is very completely satisfied. Your Mother was closer (as her nature is when she is cool and not taken by surprize), and I could not tell from her manner whether she was pleased or not, but from what I heard I believe she was. . . .

Lady Spencer writes about this time concerning her family, beginning with the newly-made Rector :

It is quite comical to see him followed by his flock, and guiding them so gently, but so decidedly and so firmly as he does. He (George) don't allow any deviation from the right path, but he only desires what he does himself. And his earnestness is truly persuasive ; but when I see his authority amongst them it strikes me in the oddest way, for I can't believe that this excellent and grave character is the boy whom I remember so little a while since a little raggamuffin hobbledehoy. Sal is up to her ears in alphabets, copybooks, and gamuts. Her babies are really uncommon fine ones, and very clever and sensible

ones.¹ And they will be admirably brought up, for she thinks and does nothing else. So much for the family circle, not forgetting Jack,² who is famously well and up to his ears in shorthorned cattle, monsters of sheep, and wallowing hogs. . . .

¹ Lady Lyttelton had five children—Caroline, who never married; George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton; Spencer; William Henry, who became a clergyman; and Lavinia, who married in 1843 the Rev. Henry Glynne, brother of Mary, Lady Lyttelton.

² Lord Althorp.

CHAPTER X

1823-1834

IN the year 1830 two important and distressing events occurred in the family circle of the Spencers—namely, the secession of the Rev. George Spencer to the Church of Rome, and the death of Admiral Sir Robert Spencer, who had been made a K.C.B. in 1828.

The period covered by this chapter includes the whole of the Reform Bill agitation, and the record is of especial importance owing to the leading part played by Lord Althorp in promoting and passing that measure. He was leader of the Opposition under the Duke of Wellington's Administration, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, as well as leader of the House, under Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, 1830-1834. His promotion to the peerage on the death of his father in 1834 led to the break-up of Lord Melbourne's first Government.

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Capt. the Hon. F. Spencer.

ALTHORP, August 11, 1823.

. . . George, your brother, continues to do his duty incomparably as parson of the parish, and I suppose there never was a better man of his years. There is also much originality about him, that makes him very entertaining to live with, and everybody is very fond of him and of his company. He has just resolved upon giving up shooting, and this for clerical reasons, and I think very good ones; but I would not have

you conclude precipitately from this that he is *Methodistical*, or any such thing, and my chief reason for mentioning this resolution of his is to guard you against any such supposition, which you might make if the story came to you from anybody who did not know his reasons and the general turn of his mind. Good-bye, my dear Captain! The sooner I see your *Un-Reverence* a-shooting the better I shall be pleased, and so will a few more. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

Bowood, November 17, 1824.

. . . I received your pleasant little note this morning, and it found me quite well and comfortable in this great house, where there is a small *informal* party that just suits me, and seems to prove (among many other things) how much fitter my good friend and his wife are for plain folks than fine folks, and what a sad mistake Fortune made when she made Lord and Lady L. preside at *blue* dinners and walk about the world upon stilts. There are here now only Colonel A'Court¹ and Mrs. and Captain A'Court, his brother, exceeding unaffected good people, but not dull, and there is really no more ceremony than civilization requires, nor any *gêne*. That excellent good fellow, Lord Ilchester, was here yesterday, but is gone to London this morning. Tommy Moore² is to dine here to-day, and I shall like to see him again, and *hear* him if possible. . . .

. . . We are going on here very pleasantly. Came yesterday Tommy Moore, who is as unaffected and as agreeable a little man as ever I met with, and whatever may be thought of "‘Lalla Rookh’ as a *naughty book*," there is no naughtiness at all in his conversation, and I should say he was good and generous and amiable. Last night he and Mrs. A'Court, who sings

¹ Colonel (afterwards General) A'Court took the name of Repington, as did his brother, afterwards an Admiral. They were brothers of the first Lord Heytesbury.

² Thomas Moore, the poet, who was also famous as a singer of Irish songs. Without a specially fine voice, he used to sing or warble with so much feeling as to cause many of his audience to shed tears. He lived in a cottage near Bowood.

Italian as well as English, and what not, rarely—they gave us duets and sometimes he gave solos, and sometimes she *solas* (is it?), accompanied by the guitar, and it was all done without parade or fuss and with talk between, and so it was kept up most agreeably, from about half-past nine till half-past eleven, bedtime. They dine as punctually at 6.30 as your Father and Mother do. . . . I like the flower garden *nee non* the chapel, but I shall talk to you about all that . . .

BLITHFIELD,¹ December 2, 1824.

. . . We took leave like sensible men and gentlemen of fortune at the convenient hour after breakfast. Rev. George [Spencer] smiling as he shook hands with us. I had some confab with him. . . . He seems to have very vague ideas of the Scriptural meaning of the world, which we are enjoined not to conform ourselves to, and I am convinced he would be a monk if he could once persuade himself that it was lawful. I am not sure now that he won't be the founder of some new order. His look too in society is strangely dreamy and abstracted. He is, however (and who deserves it better), in general a very happy creature I don't doubt, for there is almost always a smile upon that musing face of his, and he told me that when he was alone at Althorp, and had a clear day before him to lounge and look about the house, he was most happy. His words were, "I do delight in my existence." But since he can't be a monk, what is the solitude and musing to end in? . . . When we arrived here it was not yet nine, and out came my Lord² into the vestibule before the cloysters, greeting us and shaking hands with exceeding courtesy and kindness. The gents were still at their wine, and two minutes after we came in, my Lord first pinched and tickled me, and then seized me by the arm and haled me away to the dining-room, where I found E. Drummond, Heneage Legge, Henry Legge, John Sneyd, R. Bagot, Mr. Cory, and Honble. Robert Grosvenor. Greeted many, and was much greeted. . . . Here I am at the old table in the L room,³ repeatedly interrupted by my Lord,

¹ Lord Bagot's place in Staffordshire.

² William, second Lord Bagot (1773-1856).

³ L room, so called on account of its shape.

sitting alone, very poorly, in a long chair. . . . (Here is an interruption about Charles X. having been at a ball at Blithfield several years ago, and of his graceful bow to my Lord at the door of his hall.) . . . Half-past three, after post time, and after the return of the snow-covered sportsmen. Your humble servant played battledore and shuttlecock with Lady Anne Legge and Lady Harriet Bagot successively, till he *swatte* extremely. . . . Fred Ponsonby has won all hearts here, and indeed a pleasanter fellow, or one that yields more in society, I have seldom met. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon. G. Spencer.

WIMBLEDON PARK, June 26, 1825.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—I send you a couple of lines to tell you that the evening before last Fritz arrived, ushered by Nixon into the drawing-room, to our great surprise and delight, at about half-past eight. He left Genoa on the 9th, and Geneva only on the preceding Thursday, and, avoiding Paris, got to Calais by Monday night, and was in bed for a few hours. After which the steamer, which started at 3 a.m., conveyed him to the Tower-stairs by half-past 4 p.m., and the indefatigable Captain was here, with just a change of linen, at the time I have mentioned. You will not be surprised, nor ought you to be alarmed, at hearing that after such travelling he is very thin, and looks rather black than clear, but he is perfectly well. He spent I don't know how many hours yesterday on foot and on horseback. He paid innumerable visits; one, I am *sorry* to say, to Lord Melville, who promised him a ship at once. "Oh! certainly," was the easy and gracious answer. . . . Fritz left Bob¹ in great health—grown thin. His ship, he says, is in the finest order imaginable throughout, and every man in it happy; and the course of the education of the youngsters is so good, that your Father said it was the best he knew; that more would be learnt there besides Navigation and the Sciences subservient to it, than at any public school except,

¹ Captain Robert Spencer now was in command of the 46-gun frigate *Naiad*. He had acquired a reputation in the service as a first-rate gunnery officer and disciplinarian, and when the *Naiad* paid off she was spoken of as the perfection of a man-of-war.



*Captain The Hon. Robert Spencer, R.N., K.C.H.
from a portrait at Hagley after T. Phillips, R.A.*

perhaps, the Charter-House, and that he thought even eldest sons should be entered on board that Floating Academy, or any similar one, and that he hoped the example would not be lost on other ships. There were a dozen of Kings and Princes and an Emperor at Genoa, and Bob's versatile wits recommended him as usual to them, and their Majesties and Highnesses diverted his attention, and he was welcome upon all occasions, and very fortunately obliged to exert himself in consequence. . . .

The Hon. W. H. Lyttelton to Lady Sarah Lyttelton.

BEWDLEY, August 21, 1825.

. . . I walked over a good part of the park (at Hagley), sitting often and gazing at old scenes that have been, I think, singularly preserved in their pristine state, there being neither a seat nor a building, nor hardly a tree missing of all those that I knew and loved when I was a child. It is fortunate that time and the winds have been so merciful to the groves, but it is perhaps more extraordinary that no change should have been made by the hand of man, during a lapse of five-and-thirty years, in a place so old-fashioned and dressed so much in the style of the last century. . . .

SANDWELL,¹ September 1, 1825.

. . . The house is a very good one, having a great suite of good rooms, and an ample and lofty dining-room, with some handsome full-length and other portraits in it, and two Sneyderses of the very first size and merit, really fit for a Royal Gallery. All this is very enjoyable to me, and the honest, unquestionable worth of Lord Dartmouth and of his family gives me a particularly comfortable feel, without which I am never quite happy in any house, however well I may be received. Nothing could exceed the friendliness of his reception of me besides. Dick (Bagot²) is here

¹ In Staffordshire ; then belonging to the Earl of Dartmouth, and now a college for daughters of clergymen.

² The Hon. and Rev. Richard Bagot (1782-1854). In 1829 he became Bishop of Oxford, and in 1845 Bishop of Bath and Wells. He married Lady Harriet Villiers, daughter of the fourth Earl of Jersey.

without Lady Harriet. You will smile, and you will laugh, when I tell you that he has called me in this morning to revise, correct, and supply part of the Charity Sermon he is to preach next Sunday at West Bromwich, and, so far, I have done it to his satisfaction; so I suppose I must come to orders at last. . . .

ASTLEY CASTLE, September 11, 1825.

. . . Beaudesert¹ really filled me with wonder at its beauty and grandeur. I arrived about three o'clock on Friday, and found a horse ready for me, and a groom to show me about, by the courteous Marquis's orders; and mounting, and then going out upon the chace, succeeded in finding Lord Anglesey and your Father, and I accompanied them till they left off shooting. Returning through the Park, we passed (I was riding alongside the carriage their Lordships were in) over the sides of beautiful hills, with intervening glades, and looked across at other glades of the greatest beauty, covered with oaks and ashes and thorns and fern—the trees not in groves, but single, and beautifully grouped by Nature. . . . [Mr. Lyttelton goes on to describe a wonderful old oak with a girth of 34 feet, and also the house at great length and with much admiration.] . . . But I see I am getting apace into the auctioneer style, and must pull up. We had nobody there but Sir Charles Paget and Sir Mark Singleton. Lady Anglesey and Sir Charles presiding, for poor Lord Anglesey² was so ill with the *tic*, as to be unable to eat his dinner or to appear. It went off quite easily; Lady Anglesey, who is certainly not very *prévenante*, is nevertheless not stiff or formal, and I suppose that nobody who knows her or who has any tact can be *géné* in her company. Lord Anglesey came in not long after dinner; he was then as cheerful and conversible as possible, and by no sign betrayed any pain. In that he is, as everybody says, quite wonderful and exemplary. . . .

¹ Beaudesert Park, Staffs, the seat of the Marquis of Anglesey.

² First Marquis of Anglesey. He lost a leg at Waterloo. His wife was Lady Charlotte Cadogan, who married first Mr. Wellesley, afterwards first Earl Cowley. She had been divorced from him on Lord Anglesey's account.

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to Captain the Hon. F. Spencer.

HAGLEY, July 30, 1826.

. . . I am spending my evening in an airy old-fashioned book-room at the top of Hagley House, with windows overlooking all the magnificent woods of this park, and then by a side view, plains, hills, and dales to the farthest distance, where one just perceives a faint line of Welch mountains. A band of music is playing far enough off to sound beautiful, a beautiful setting sun lighting it all up. Plenty, in short, to make up a very goodly heritage. But, as if to show how far that alone is from sufficing, there in the midst of it all is, tottering along on his melancholy evening walk, *the owner!*¹—talking loud to himself, afraid of all human beings, and occupied only by gloomy delusions, unsatisfying wild pompous fancies. He is generally much better in health and much weaker in mind than when I saw him thirteen years ago. His look is that of a hale man of fifty, fat and florid, and not wild or at all disagreeable. . . .

Lady Sarah Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

September 15, 1827.

. . . Bob's appointment² was a very gratifying compliment, for it was the result of no personal acquaintance, and of course quite unsolicited, and the Duke distinctly accounted for making the offer by his having heard, from all the officers he had consulted, that Captain Spencer was the best man he could appoint. It is most laborious; but he hopes to be of real use, professionally, and intends, and is allowed to intend, to go to sea in case of war. We are rather afraid for his health, for the labour is incessant. . . .

Mr. Lyttelton's next letter to his wife gives an account of his taking George,³ his eldest son, aged ten, to Eton.

¹ George Fulke, Lord Lyttelton; he was not in his right mind.

² He was appointed Private Secretary and Groom of the Bed-chamber to the Duke of Clarence, then Lord High Admiral, afterwards King William IV.

³ George, afterwards Lord Lyttelton, became a distinguished classical scholar. He won the Newcastle Medal at Eton, and was bracketed with Dr. Vaughan as Senior Classic at Cambridge in 1838.

THE CHRISTOPHER INN, ETON,
September 18, 1827, 4 o'clock.

. . . Well, it is all over. The dear little fellow slept immensely, woke as bright as possible, mind and body, and it was all holiday to him. Not so indeed to poor Papa; yet not much otherwise, except when something irresistible came over his heart and eyes for a minute or so. We were here at a little before one, and very soon after at Chapman's, and in a trice after that at Dr. Keate's,¹ the interview with whom was short and ceremonious, and of course led to nothing except the entry of George's name, written in a hand which the Doctor was pleased to praise, in the list of the school, and the customary *buono-mano*.

He is very pedagogic, no doubt, and George said he was a *stiff old gentleman*, and *awful*, and that he should not like to be examined by him. I gave your letter to Mrs. Johnson, and she took me up to George's room and into several others. I liked all I saw, and George's is very airy. George liked her very much. . . .

I had more talk with Chapman,² and trust everything is on the best footing between me and him, and I feel more and more sure that George is in very good hands. Everybody says so. Dr. Goodall (the Provost), to whom I was introduced to-day, says so, and an old fruit-selling woman, into whose shop I took George to treat him to a plum and apricot, said he was good when a boy, and bestowed a special panegyric upon him. . . .

At the end of this letter a postscript was added by George, Lord Lyttelton, more than forty years later:

“While sitting in the Christopher on this occasion my Father burst into a flood of tears, which lasted for some time, such as I have hardly seen before or since.”

SAVILE PLACE,
September 19, 1827.

. . . I left George this morning in the very best health and spirits, having stood a very good examination indeed; after which Chapman told me he was equal to

¹ Dr. Keate, the famous head-master of Eton.

² The Rev. James Chapman, afterwards Bishop of Colombo.

the Upper Fourth, but, considering his age, it would be best for the boy to be placed only in the Middle (Fourth). Indeed, indeed I have been too soft about the whole thing, but when one has any heart at all, and is watching and watching such a creature, so good and so happy, a thousand causes conspire to make one feel a *great deal*, not at all painful, but still a great deal on parting. All his little ways were affecting to me on the whole journey; his ignorance of the world before him, which I trust will prove to him not such a very corrupting or wretched one, came in for its share in affecting me as it has done you, my Sally. But I assure you I have now many very good grounds for the best hopes about the child, and am thankful for them, and trust I am neither the worse nor the less happy for what I have gone through for him. . . .

Mr. Lyttelton succeeded his half-brother as Lord Lyttelton in 1828.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
August, 17, 1829.

. . . George is with us. He is in the highest health, and we have every reason to be happy about him. He is, if possible, more affectionate, well-principled, and bright-tempered than ever. His progress is very great at school, and if he were not *trying to be idle*, for the sake of being in the Eton high fashion, he would do just as much in the way of learning as anybody. I ought to beg pardon and be ashamed of myself for saying so much about my own son, but I have reasons or excuses twain. First and foremost and sufficient, that it is to you, who are a very real auntie and sister; and secondly, that it is his unhappy fate to be praised by none but those who know him thoroughly. His shyness is so excessive that all strangers suppose him surly, proud, stupid, and silent, and with very good reason. I can't wonder at them. So I think it fair we should tell the truth among friends. . . .

ALTHORP,
October 2, 1829.

MY DEAREST CAZ,—I have been intending—but I will not begin by that worn-out sentence—suffice it

to say, or rather to *see*, that here I am writing to you, as I might have done before, had not sundry *worries* and *worrets* hindered me. And now I have much to say in a small way. First, never were people so kind or so pleased or so pleasant as my Father and Mother on their visit to Hagley; it will be long a well-remembered week by all parties concerned. They were, I do believe (such had been our modesty) unaffectedly surprised at the beauty of the place and comfort of the house; and they admired so as *quite* to satisfy us. I believe too that all our little arrangements to receive them and help on the visit did please them, and that even my Mother was *nearly* as comfortable as at home. In short, nothing could, as the phrase is, *go off* more satisfactorily. They came loaded with presents, the chief permanent one being a beautiful old French clock of Auguste's workmanship, which suits and decorates the library chimney to admiration. The most remarkable present besides was a huge chest of splendid and first-rate fireworks, which were most successfully let off in front of the library windows under my brother Frederick's orders, to the immense delight of our children, and no less of all manner of neighbours we asked in to see them, and of about two hundred villagers who took advantage of open gates and a general bidding to come and fill the lawn and be shone on by unheard-of rockets, Bengal lights, and Roman candles. It will make a talk for many a day no doubt. A few days after our visitors' departure we followed them to this place, where we stay out October. . . .

HAGLEY,
February 16, 1830.

. . . I begin by a very good account of my dear husband. . . . This is delightful, and makes my own family affairs the less engrossing to me. The newspapers have, however, most likely told you I have had enough in that quarter to think and feel about—one great good and one great and sore evil! My brother Frederick's promising marriage. Miss Poyntz we have of course known all her life, and a most charming creature she is, neither very young nor pretty, but he is most deeply in love with her, and of course that is all one could wish, and once loved she must be



William Henry, Lord Lyttelton.

loved for ever, such a depth of sweetness and principle and winning humility and good sense is seldom met with. My other dear and poor, poor brother! What shall I say of him? I mean George, who is become a Catholic—we fear a Catholic priest. His motives have been pure, and such has been his state of uncertainty and doubt and unfixedness upon all but practical piety in religious matters for years, that we have no reason to be surprised at this last fatal change. But it is so deep an affliction to my dear Father and Mother, so great a breaking up of our family, so painful a loss at Althorp, where his presence and ministry, though but imperfect pleasures, were yet invaluable pleasures to us, that it weighs us all down. He took this step suddenly, and with very insufficient fore-thought and knowledge. Altogether a bad business. . . .

George Spencer became a Passionist monk, and took the name of Father Ignatius of St. Paul. His family continued to treat him with unfailing affection, and respected his sincerity, though they deplored his action, and Lady Spencer put on mourning. His father made him a liberal allowance, and, as the priest who wrote his life said, their conduct towards him was “an exception indeed to the treatment which members of other families have experienced as a reward for their fidelity to God and their conscience.”

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 13, 1830.

. . . I have not yet seen your Father this morning, but he came back last night at near eleven from the Roxburghe [Club] dinner, and he sat and described the dinner that he said was the dullest he had ever known with such good-humour and in so lounging a way, it was quite delightful. Your Mother laughed, and quizzed the club good-humouredly, and it was all very pleasant, and my duet with her at dinner was quite

in harmony. The play, where we found Brecknock and W. Ponsonby, and where I was put in the seat of honour and 'vantage at the corner next the stage, had only one drawback, that you were not there. And really it is a pity you should not see this young *blood* *filly* Miss Kemble,¹ for indeed she is a fine and an original actress of a high class, and I was extremely pleased and affected by her acting, and shall never forget many of her looks and the tone and expression of many of her words. . . .

A Miss Sturges Bourne wrote from Hagley on September 27, 1830: "You cannot think how worthy the place is of the poet and Lucy Fortescue.² Lady Lyttelton has that delightful manner that makes you feel intimate directly, very agreeable, and the good that is appearing in her conversation and in all that she does, and everything gives one a feeling of real excellence in a rather old-fashioned way. The place is beautiful, hilly, and wooded and high, and fine views, obelisks, and temples and deer all in character."

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

SPENCER HOUSE,
November 2, 1830.

. . . All well hitherto. Boys taken to the play, where they were highly amused with Sir F. Wrong-head and family in the "Provoked Husband" and with "Teddy the Tiler," a new farce, in which they were also duly *gratified* with the sight of the King,³ Queen, and all their courtiers and ladies in attendance, of whom we had a perfect view just opposite us. The King and Queen highly applauded, and "God save the King" and "Rule, Britannia," properly encored. The King walked into his box most sturdily; bowed sufficiently, laughed ditto, especially at Teddy.

¹ The famous actress, Fanny Kemble, who made her début in 1829.

² George, the first Lord Lyttelton, married Lucy, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, of Filleigh, co. Devon.

³ William IV. and Queen Adelaide.

Though the Queen is not pretty, I liked what I could see of her looks, especially her countenance. The two urchin Princes¹ of Cumberland and Cambridge were right and left of the King and Queen, in little Hussar dresses, with stars and ribbons over them. Not altogether to my taste the Cumbrian one, but very likely it is prejudice; had to my eye a very conceited and disagreeable look. The other a quiet boy enough. . . .

Robert Spencer was employed off the coast of Greece during the War of Independence, and was made a K.C.B. in 1828. He died on board his ship, off Alexandria, in 1830, having just received the appointment of Surveyor-General of the Ordnance.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

SPENCER HOUSE,
December 23, 1830.

Your brother's letter will have told you, my dearest Caz, how much reason there was for the paragraph which excited your kind and affectionate feeling for us. We have indeed suffered a painful trial! An affliction which, though unmixed with any of the feeling of shame and horror which aggravated the *report* ten years ago, has been, and will be a heavy one—a great blow to my Father and Mother, and a sad change in our family state and our future prospects—so dependent on him we have lost for comfort and brightness! And just now you know we were expecting him.

You will *all* feel for us. But none of you knew what he was to us, how his presence, his letters, the very thought of him, made up the brightest and the tenderest of our hearts' feelings ever since he was born. I trust there is no mixture of repining—not a wish indeed to recall him from that blessed place of love and peace for which he was so well fitted, and where I hope he is! . . .

¹ Prince George of Cumberland, afterwards King of Hanover, and Prince George, afterwards Duke of Cambridge.

The debates on the Reform Bill, introduced by Lord John Russell on March 1, had now begun. Lord Althorp was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the House of Commons.

Lady Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

HAGLEY,
March 7, 1831.

... What magnificent speaking has come out in Parliament! It is a sort of reform to be listening to the Lord Advocate and Mr. Stanley¹ or Mr. Macaulay, instead of *O'Gorman* and Briscoe and Leader. I quite enjoy it for dear Althorp's ears sake! As to us we talk each other into such enthusiasm about the Ministry, that it would be enough to fit out a whole Treasury bench with a fair share to each. As to carrying the Bill, I expect anything but that. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
March 24, 1831.

... Lord L. is very well, very busy, and very military, recruiting for the yeomanry, and coveting every tall man, and canvassing to the right and left as he rides. We expect our gallant and most zealous Colonel Commandant, Lord Plymouth, here to-morrow. Lord L. in a moment of *épanchement de cœur*, has actually engaged the drill serjeant of this troop (who is promised us, a very tall and formidable potentate from the Life Guards) to lodge *here, in this house*, for a twelvemonth!—some difficulty as to his quarters having occurred. I only tremble for the housemaids; and I am afraid Mrs. Ellis² will have to counteract his seductive qualities with more than her usual plaintive vigilance. . . .

The Bill was abandoned owing to an amendment being carried by a majority of eight against the Government, and Parliament dissolved. But Lord

¹ Afterwards Earl of Derby, "the Rupert of debate."

² The housekeeper at Hagley.

Grey resumed office in ten days. The letters of this date show how intense was the feeling throughout the country. The following relates to the candidature of Captain F. Spencer for Worcestershire, a long-remembered *coup de théâtre* engineered by Lord Lyttelton.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
May 9, 1831.

. . . Well as I say, then, all outward show is peaceful. But what a worry within! What a simmering and inch by inch wearing out of one! Now I suppose you know what is happening in your old *patria cara*. Parliament was dissolved, and a great cry arose in all parts of this country in favour of some reform candidate being proposed, and against Colonel Lygon,¹ who has always voted against every kind and degree of reform. The cry increased and at last grew to such a pitch that the people by thousands were up in every town, on the roads, in the streets, looking out and enquiring "who will stand?" No candidate, however, appeared. Certain squires kept meeting, writing, wishing and talking about it, but none of them would "bell the cat." A Mr. —, a very unpopular and questionable hop merchant, came forward, but withdrew again. One feared one thing and another another, and all the time the middle and lower ranks were growing louder and more dogged in their opinion and determination. When one morning, April 26, I went in to visit Lord L. in his dressing-room. "I have a bold thought," said he. "What is it?" said I. "I have thought of a candidate. Your brother Frederick." So then you may imagine, perhaps, my terror, my remonstrances, my entreaties, my arguments, my sickness. All in vain. His Lordship was sure it would do—sure it would take—sure he would take the consequences—sure he did not care if anybody found fault—it was the best thing to be done. It should be done. I meantime kept life in my body

¹ Colonel the Hon. Edward Lygon, brother of the second Earl Beauchamp.

by thinking that of course Fritz would refuse ; that *his* head was cool, that it would come to nothing—that perhaps Lord L. would think better of it when his beard was off. Not a word of it all happened. Lord L. persevered—was off by two o'clock for Althorp—found Fritz, taking snuff over his own comfortable fireside. Fritz accepted, published his address, came here, and has been (whatever may be the final result) a candidate of most unparalleled popularity—was met by 20,000 people at Dudley, is dragged through every town, cheered by every voice, and not allowed to spend one farthing, happen what may. He stands avowedly and in earnest for this Parliament *only*, and on no ground of course but his pledge to vote for the Reform Bill. The other party are working very hard against him, and Colonel Lygon spends I don't know what. £2,000 a day *before* the poll opened ! But yet we are very sanguine.

Now, don't suppose that it is a wish to see Fritz M.P. for the county, or a desire for the Reform Bill, that makes poor dear Bessy [the Hon. Mrs. F. Spencer] and me so dreadfully anxious and eager. No, my dear. It is that this very daring plan will, if it fails, bring such a storm about us of anger and disappointment from all my family—my *unconsulted*, and prudent, and Ministerial, and very calm and measuring family ! Only think of having to go to town (bad enough at any rate !) defeated, having got the *Chancellor of the Exchequer's brother* defeated, by mere hot-headedness and injudiciousness, and all the sins *most* visited by the world's anger ! Oh!!! Meantime if it were not for that, it would be some fun. We read (I must not say *write*) such good squibs and verses, and we 'have such good accounts of Fritz's speaking, and such comical stories are happening every hour. But alas ! alas ! why is Hagley Hall like the Escurial ? Because it is a gridiron, I say, and so does poor Bessy, my *fellow steak*. I must go to her now, and try to make each other worse. Lord L. is at Worcester, sitting hidden in a corner of an inn to hear news....

Captain Spencer won by a majority of 430.
Lady Spencer had died on June 8.



Gibbon.

Mr. Fred'k Montagu

EDWARD GIBBON AND FREDERICK MONTAGU.

From a drawing by Lavinia, Countess Spencer.

To face p. 262.

Lady Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

LONDON,
October 4, 1831.

. . . I have not much means of giving you news. All I have heard is, alas! of an ugly character. People will have it the Ministers have no chance of carrying the second reading. The division is not to take place till Thursday they say, so there will be time for the display of all sorts of eloquence. . . . Lord L. had a great argument, but quite in vain, with the Bishop of Oxford,¹ who is quite resolute against every part of the Bill, and immovable. . . . Lord L. says Lord Essex is the only man he has spoken to who seems sanguine; they agree in not expecting the act of insanity to be actually committed. Lord Dacre told him the Monday's debate was extremely dull excepting Lord Grey's very fine speech. He went down yesterday before dinner in the vain hope of presenting a petition, but the number to come on was so great, his name had no chance of being called. . . .

On October 8 Lord Wharncliffe moved "that the Bill be read that day six months," and the amendment was carried by a majority of forty-one. Parliament was prorogued on October 20.

Lady Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

LONDON,
October 9, 1831.

. . . Alas! what bad news after all. Worse than I believe anybody expected. Althorp sat with us yesterday for some time, and told us the Bill would be thrown out "by a spanking majority," desiring, of course, not to be quoted. But I don't think he looked for such a number. Lord Lyttelton came home at a quarter before seven, and went to bed just as I was getting up. Althorp seemed quite well, and was very agreeable and cheerful. Monday seemed to be weighing on his mind though; he was so afraid the House of

¹ Richard Bagot.

Commons would be inclined to go too far, and be very difficult to lead. It is awful to think how much depends on him. Heaven help him! . . . Lord L. is up and surprisingly well, thank God! but in very low spirits. He says there never was such a speech as Lord Brougham's. The power of argument appeared to him entirely irresistible, and the eloquence splendid. . . .

Lord Althorp was one of the best leaders the House ever had. Without great abilities and a bad speaker, he had good sense and perfect honesty. Such was his influence, that he once prevented an amendment being carried by saying he had prepared some notes which were conclusive against it to his own mind, but that he had mislaid them and could not remember what they were. The House voted with him. The management of the Reform Bill in committee largely devolved upon him; and Sir Henry Hardinge said, "It was Althorp carried the Bill. His fine temper did it." Lord Althorp told his nephew, Lord Lyttelton, that he hated being in office to such a degree that when Chancellor of the Exchequer he could not trust himself to sleep with pistols in his room, as was his custom when out of office. Lord Brougham's speech was said to be the finest he ever made. He concluded by falling on his knees and beseeching the Peers not to reject the Bill.

Lady Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

LONDON,
October 15, 1831.

. . . Yesterday I went to see poor dear Althorp at his dinner, and so hurried and uneasy a meal I never saw. I was some time waiting in his private room, and stood looking through his poor little myrtle garden on the window at the parade, where there were people running and shouting and meeting—signs of the awful times—and I could fancy myself admitted to

the Captain's cabin on the eve of a hurricane. He looked fagged and ill, just out of a long Cabinet sitting, and before he had eaten one cutlet arrived the Governor of the Bank, announced by the ghost of Mr. Wickham,¹ with his sleeves tucked up, and looking as if he were a mere writing machine. I felt quite oppressed with the air of Downing Street, and envying for Althorp every dandy and lounger I met afterwards with no responsibility on his mind. The assault on the Duke of Cumberland was a lie, but Lord Londonderry² was very seriously hurt. I never thought of telling Fritz how on the night before he went away the mob—a small detachment—came and gave three cheers at the door at ten p.m. and woke *les petits*, and rather frightened me by knocking about twenty times running at the door—a very disagreeable serenade. . . .

SPENCER HOUSE,
October 9, 1831.

. . . We dined yesterday very agreeably with dear Althorp, who was so good as to ask us. We met Sir James Graham, Mr. Stanley, and Lord John, and it was quite a treat to us. They were all very agreeable and cheerful, though their situation is indeed awful! So beset with difficulties that *this world* supplies no hope for us, I do think now. Of course we heard no news among Cabinet Ministers. Althorp talked of a ten days' holyday, but I can't say the others gave him any encouragement. . . .

HAGLEY,
October 29, 1831.

. . . We dropped Lord Lyttelton at Birmingham, where he dined at a (not political) public dinner of nearly three hundred people. . . . No public politics, but he had much private talk with many people of influence, and all he saw were stout reformers and equally stout opponents of Attwood and the Political Union. Attwood is so entirely absorbed by the currency question that he is reckoned rather cracked

¹ Lord Althorp's private secretary.

² Lord Londonderry was attacked as he drove through the streets in a cabriolet, but his coachman whipped the horses into a gallop, and he was saved from personal injury. Many peers had to be protected by the newly-created police force.

about it, otherwise a most amiable good man. Lord L. says *in his life* he never heard such a cheer as that for Ministers after dinner. It seemed as they never meant to stop, and must have shaken down the house. And Birmingham is particularly quiet and prosperous and well-disposed just now. I thought our Midland metropolis might interest you nowadays, so gave you all this rig. . . .

Thomas Attwood was a prominent reformer and Chartist. He presented the "People's Charter" to the House of Commons in 1830, and at this time was organizing a strike against payment of taxes, as a protest against the rejection of the Reform Bill. Lord Althorp induced him to postpone calling the meeting of the Birmingham Union.

Lady Lyttelton to Earl Spencer.

HAGLEY,
November 6, 1831.

. . . The Worcester meeting went off beautifully; and if they *did* burn the Bishop and poor Lord Plymouth in the evening (as Lord L. heard they meant to do), it must have been a peaceful ceremony, for we heard nothing of any riot, in spite of Guy Fawkes and crackers into the bargain. Lord Lyttelton has a letter from the Bishop of Llandaff,¹ who intends positively and without hesitation to vote for the Bill when it next comes on. His letter, as his always are, quite pleasant to read from the perfection of its language. He says he thinks many of his brethren will be taking his line. Lord Lyttelton has written word to Althorp of this vote gained. I hope he has heard of many others. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
November 10, 1831.

. . . Your very comfortable letter is a great cheerer this gloomy day, when the newspaper has so little

¹ Bishop Copleston.

sunshine. I do suppose that the chances that the cholera will not come among us are now very small; and I sometimes am half amused at the thought of the universal laying aside of the Reform Question, the National Unions, the Conservative meetings, and the Bishop-burnings, which that event will occasion. It is odd, however, that I am getting used to the thought of its being in England, and I begin to understand how people live at Constantinople and Portici as if no danger were near them. . . .

The first threat of cholera occurred in May, 1831, when Sir John Campbell wrote: "If the cholera breaks out in London in July, it will make short work of Reform." No serious outbreak occurred till February, 1832.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
November 12, 1831.

. . . We are becoming more and more painfully interested in the Sunderland news, and having ascertained that *three coaches* arrive daily from Sunderland at Birmingham, it seems as if the absence, and not the excess, of fear or precaution were the proof of folly. You are so far off, I suppose, you have thought little of it yet. It has certainly brought a new set of ideas forward in one's mind, and opened my eyes to possibilities and prospects I was not accustomed to, and am ashamed at finding so foreign to me. I *believe* I do not fear for my own life, as much by a great deal for the many wretchednesses which *may* be impending to poison its *avenir*. But in spite of these ideas we are going on very cheerfully in our usual routine and regularity. We have not detected any grudge to us on the stupid old election account in our neighbours, and next week we are to enjoy the feast of reason and the flow of soul with all the anti-reformers and Tories and Lygonians we could muster, who swallow the affront of the invitation very composedly. We are in no fear of riots. The Bishop called here to-day unpelted, and the yeomanry sleep in their beds. But the times are serious, and not *piping* certainly.

ALTHORP,
December 12, 1831.

. . . We had two or three most painful days just before our journey here, so far I mean as worry goes. Lord Lyttelton had just accepted the troublesome and anxious and rather thankless office of seconder of the Address ; but that very day we were all upset by the breaking out of a very serious *turn out* of colliers all over Staffordshire and our black neighbourhood. Lord Plymouth (at Melton) was sent for express ; but, of course, the whole business of collecting the whole regiment of yeomanry from all quarters of our county fell on your brother, who, with the help of his indefatigable adjutant [Captain Emmott], a capital soldier from the Blues, did get it done in a surprisingly small number of hours, and was able to take command next day, and march into Dudley at their head. . . . Matters seemed soon settled ; Lord Plymouth arrived, and Lord L. was able to hurry up to town, and get through his business of full-dress dinner, speech, and levée. We have only just now heard that the disturbances are not over, the yeomanry still out, and, really, the aspect of affairs is so dark I hardly like the prospect of going home. We thought the effect of the first appearance of the troops had been sufficient to quiet all the rioters, especially as they had been settled with much to their advantage by the master-manufacturers. But it seems they were not finally satisfied, and will not yet work. It is entirely a quarrel about wages ; no politics mixed up with it. . . . I ought to have told you that he is said to have spoken with ability in the House, in spite of much disadvantage ; and that you are not to mind the newspapers' report of what he said—they called him Lord Dinorben, and misrepresented his speech besides. . . .

Charles Greville says “Lord Lyttelton made a very foolish speech, and was very well cut up by Lord Harrowby.” The House of Lords on May 7 voted in favour of the postponement of the disfranchising clauses, which was virtually a rejection of the Bill.

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 8, 1832.

. . . The event of last night's proceedings in the House of *real incurables* has not raised my spirits, and I suppose have astonished everybody not in the secret. How many it will have pleased remains to be seen, more especially what King William the Tar will say about it. Lord Grey said nothing indicating in the least what would be done; but as everybody sees that there are but two alternatives—his resigning or making an enormous batch of peers—neither we nor the Bill can be long uncertain of our fate. I think it is, however, ten to one that we shall have a proper reinforcement to our numbers which will put the Bill *out of its pain*. I am the more inclined to this supposition because, when they were debating the adjournment, Lord Grey said it would do any day but the *morrow*, which seems to me to prove that he has all the patents ready in his pocket. . . .

Lord Grey resigned next day, and the public excitement was intense. He resumed office on the King promising to make new peers.

The next letter begins with commenting on "this sadly-distracted kingdom" and "the doubtful and fearful futurity that impends over us," etc.

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

LONDON,
May 9, 1832.

. . . The King I hear was to be in town at twelve. Whether he is now— Good heavens! Here is Fritz come with the tremendous news of the King's refusal to make the Peers, and consequent acceptance of the Minister's resignation!¹ Will there never be an honest King? And what is to betide us now that the King has stripped himself of all that incalculable power he possessed for our protection, and made the

¹ This was not true.

first person in the State the most hateful, and hence-forward our principal weakness? To be sure the Ministers (of yesterday) stand higher than ever they did, since here is a complete justification of all that could be imputed to them; and it is possible their unblemished and noble characters may yet save us from a revolution. But God only knows. I see nothing distinctly, but all that I do see is most dark and ugly.

My Yeomanry Commission I shall probably, unless I find I cannot colourably, resign. For I certainly do not like to hold it for the purpose of forcing the people to submit to a Tory Ministry formed upon such principles and in consequence of such an intrigue as the present one. God grant that I may not be obliged to turn out again not merely for the suppression of a local riot.

On May 7 Lord Lyndhurst moved to postpone the clause disfranchising the condemned boroughs, and on this amendment being carried in the House of Lords by 151 to 116, the Government called on the King to create fifty new peerages. This he declined to do, and the Ministry resigned. The King sent for Lord Lyndhurst and the Duke of Wellington; but as the Duke could not form a Government, Lord Grey was recalled, and the Bill was allowed to pass on the advice of the Duke.

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

May 10, Three O'clock.— . . . Returned from the Levee. The King looking as cool as ever; and he spoke for a minute, just to make a distinction, to Lord Radnor. What people these Kings are! It was said that Lord Harrowby had been sent for, but Fritz says it is the Duke of Wellington. Query. How many of ours would vote for the Bill brought in by His Grace? I know of two; Lord Radnor and Lord L[yttelton]. But how many more? Would not *he* have to make new Peers? Meantime the very Tories expect all kinds of confusion and difficulties, but say that *we* are answerable for leaving the country in such a state—and the

King's for having allowed his name to be used to the lowest of the people, etc. All this is very pleasant in ordinary times, but now, too serious. . . .

The House was so crowded there was no moving about conveniently; and I could not see, from where I sat, the Episcopal Bench. The heat was great, but not near equal, I think, to what it seemed in the House last October. Walked part of the way home with Lords Dartmouth and Aylesford. The latter was *shut out*, consequently there would have been 152. There must have been a great *Whip*. I talked amicably with Dartmouth, who gave me to understand that *many* (*i.e.*, *he for one*) would secede from the House if it was to be *swamped*. Truly (*I thought*—I did not *say* it), so much the better. . . .

May 11, 1832.

. . . I am now sanguine about the result of all this commotion. Lord Grey remains at the helm, with his hands much strengthened for good purposes after the Reform Bill has been passed, and it will have been passed now by so clear a majority of the people, as distinguished from the populace, that it will be better received and be more final. . . .

May 19, 1832.—. . . There is no House of Lords to-day. It has occurred to me that it may not be long ere the *to-day* may be omitted.

May 22, 1832.—. . . I have good hopes that their numbers on the Opposition side are much reduced, though the deuce a man but Lord Harewood has said upon his legs that he meant to stay away or let the Bill pass unopposed, and I cannot make out that anybody is gone save the Duke of Wellington and Lord Lyndhurst, and *R. Oxford* [Bishop Bagot]. . . .

The Reform Bill was passed on June 4.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Pole-Carew.

HAGLEY,
July 23, 1832.

. . . I see you have the cholera round you at Plymouth, so have we all round us. Heaven protect us! It is an awful time, but it is surprising how the habit of hearing of it and thinking of it wears out the

dread. When first it was at Sunderland I could not have imagined the composure with which I now daily inquire for the new cases of the night at Stourbridge! We expect George at home on Monday the 30th, unless the cholera breaks up Eton sooner. . . . You are surely right in not wishing to move. Every hour of time reconciles one by custom to the danger. I trust the exemption, which has been hitherto remarkable, in favour of solitary large houses and clean villages, may be exemplified in all our cases, and that we may yet live to *talk over* the mercies of our preservation. . . . Have you ever read Miss Mitford's "Our Village"? The fifth volume, lately published, has a few good and pretty articles in it, light enough for a sick-room, and worthy to succeed Prince Pückler.¹

In June, 1833, Creevey met Lord and Lady Lyttelton dining with Miss Berry, and wrote afterwards :

. . . I met Brougham yesterday at dinner at Miss Berry's, and a most agreeable dinner we had. In addition to Brougham—Sydney Smith, Lord and Lady Lyttelton, Lady Charlotte Lyndsay, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley. Lady Lyttelton, you know, is a sister of Althorp's, and seemed quite as worthy, and in her dress as homely as he, tho' the Berry told me she was very highly accomplished. It was shortly after I came into Parliament that Ward and Lyttelton came into the House of Commons, each with a great academic fame and every prospect of being distinguished public men. Poor Ward went mad and died. Lyttelton having married and being very poor, could not afford to continue in Parliament, and though he wanted little to enable him to do so, the meanness of Lord Spencer would not supply him with it,² and he has been an exile almost ever since. Tho' grown very grey for his age, he is as lively and agreeable a companion as the town can produce, and they are said to be the happiest couple in the world. . . .

¹ Prince Pückler Muskau, an Austrian, who came over to England and wrote his memoirs afterwards. He was the original of Count Smorltork in "Pickwick."

² This certainly was not true.

Lady Lyttelton's eldest daughter, Caroline, came out in 1833.

Lady Lyttelton to Miss Pole-Carew.

1833.

. . . Caroline and I have *gone out*, as they call it, three or four times. Her first and only ball was at Devonshire House, where she went in the highest expectation of pleasure and comfort; and found herself crowded, heated, frightened to death, asked to dance *instantly* by too kind a cousin who thought himself doing her a service (Lord Morpeth), dragged into the first quadrille of thirty-two she had ever seen; and of course she puzzled the figure, got quizzed and pitied, and does not wish to dance again. . . .

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

SPENCER HOUSE,
May 26, 1834.

. . . Lord Essex has been here, and I was ten minutes with him. The blow-up in the Cabinet is but too likely—and Heaven knows how far the explosion may reach! The most material thing he mentioned was that, after a Cabinet held yesterday, Lord Grey had decided on resigning, *if*—something not at all improbable was to happen. . . .

The “something not at all improbable” was the resignation of Lord Althorp over the differences between Mr. Daniel O’Connell, Leader of the Irish party, and Mr. E. J. Littleton, afterwards Lord Hatherton, at that time Secretary for Ireland. The latter had behaved with indiscretion, and Lord Althorp felt himself involved, and resigned in June. Lord Grey immediately sent in his resignation, and was succeeded by Lord Melbourne as Prime Minister, who persuaded Lord Althorp to resume office, which he did with reluctance. However, in the following November, the death of his father removed Lord Althorp from the

leadership of the House of Commons, and gave William IV. an excuse for turning out the Whigs and putting in the Tories. In "Coningsby" there is an amusing account of the excitement the news of Lord Spencer's death caused in a Tory house-party; but Charles Greville talks as if the King's step was quite unexpected by both parties, for, though Lord Spencer's death had been imminent for some time, the Tories were not prepared. Peel was away travelling in Italy, and was sent for from Rome to take up the Seals of Office as Prime Minister.

Lord Lyttelton took his eldest son to Cambridge in 1834, whence he wrote to his wife.

Lord Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

CLARE HALL,
October 16, 1834.

. . . We got last night to Audley End in the best possible time before dinner, but not without four horses for the last stage, which would not have been wanted had we not been very ill-driven all the preceding ones. Lord and Lady Braybrooke received us most cordially, and the evening passed very agreeably in that very magnificent huge old mansion. A hall, the vastest and most perfect I have ever seen, which Lord B.¹ said he believed to be the largest in the kingdom—great bow-windowed apartments, one of them, in which they usually sit, well furnished with books, the others full of pictures, a few fine ones, many curious. In short, just what you know would interest me, as it did; George, too, who seems, you know, to have a taste like his Grandfather—for *everything*. There was nobody in the house except our host and hostess, and six or seven, or, for aught I know, eight children, six of whom, after leave asked of me, were introduced after dinner: four boys and

¹ Richard, third Lord Braybrooke, married Catherine, daughter of Right Hon. George Grenville.

two girls, all fine, fair, fat children, very honest and true, but rather noisy and not quite *in hand*, I thought—very pleasant, however, I'll promise you, to me. The conversation throve unceasingly. Lady Braybrooke *ne tait pas* and my old fellow-collegian, rather a shy man in mixed company, was wondrous agreeable and flowing too in talk, and they both did the honours of their house in the simplest and heartiest way imaginable. . . . I think George behaved *very* well—allowance being made for his irresistible propensity to bury himself in a book, whether anybody is speaking to him or not. All he said was extremely good and becoming, and I observed one or two very judicious *reticences* of his. Well, we got here about one, and set off to Trinity College and found Whewell, whose first reception of me and of his pupil was singularly agreeable and proper. . . .

There is a letter from Lady Anne Bingham about this date, in distress at Lord Althorp's going to Scotland to shoot. "I can't say I enjoy the visit to Lord Panmure. My dear, dear Jack of old going to a Scotch house where they drink so horribly¹—when he will be made much of in an *étalage* of wine and whisky. The Lord keep with him!" Lady Anne was now very old, and she thought of Scotland as the remote and barbaric country it was considered to be in the eighteenth century.

¹ Lord Panmure's house had been famous for drinking bouts only a few years before.

CHAPTER XI

1837-1840

AN interval of two years occurs here in the correspondence, and when it is resumed we enter upon an entirely new phase of Lady Lyttelton's life. Lord Lyttelton died on April 30, 1837, aged fifty-five, after a long illness, most patiently and cheerfully borne, and in 1838 his widow was appointed Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria, which led subsequently to her selection as governess to the Queen's children. Henceforth her life was spent mainly at Court, and we have a series of vivid sketches of the brilliant scenes and the domestic life of the Royal Family, of which she was an intimate witness.

The next letter is to the Dowager Countess of Pembroke,¹ who was Lady Lyttelton's greatest friend outside the family circle. The first part is lost, but was evidently about Lord Lyttelton's health, which had for some time caused anxiety to his family. It was written in the winter of 1836.

Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Countess of Pembroke.

... We have had pleasures and comforts in other respects to support us. The chief has been what I

¹ Catherine, widow of the tenth Earl of Pembroke, often mentioned in the earlier letters as "Catinka."

can't be modest enough to withhold from you—our dear boy George having gained a great distinction at Cambridge. He has been chosen the Craven Scholar of the year. It is the chief classical prize, open to the whole University, and never since its institution (180 years ago) gained before by a man of *any* rank in society, or of *his* rank in College. His predecessors have all been hard-working scholars, Porson, Blomfield, Keate, and many others of great fame in their day. He has earned it by honest and voluntary industry, and it has brought us so many testimonies to his good conduct and popularity and so many expressions of good-will from all quarters, that it greatly enhances the joy his dear father has (I must say most deservedly) received from it. George himself has *borne the trial* very well. His letter beginning "My dear father and mother, thank you much for your letters—I knew they would be the pleasantest things of all"—was not the *unpleasantest* thing to us, and he is just as quiet and manly and industrious as ever. . . .

HAGLEY,
June 6, 1837.

. . . I cannot thank you so as to express what I feel for your very kind letter, my dear Lady Pembroke. How can I have been blest with such a friend as you are to me! I look upon it as among the heap of most unmerited and peculiar mercies bestowed on me. . . . How exactly you know what I feel—nothing but experience can teach it—and it comforts one, I can hardly explain why, to be understood, and felt *with*, as well as felt *for*. And how very glad I am to know that *still*, after so long, you feel the same perpetual return, or rather unbroken course of thought and feeling referring to him who has left you. I have feared so very much that it would wear off, and that time would remove the greatest pleasure and happiness I have left—that of thinking of him, and fancying a communication still between us. I can, thank God for His mercy, think of him with no bitterness of regret, and I do not wish him back again *deliberately*. I am content to be the sufferer, and that he should be where he is, in peace and glory. How selfish it seems to be *only just* able to feel this! . . .

On October 3, 1838, Lady Lyttelton entered upon her duties as Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Victoria.

[*First page lost*] . . . knowledge of myself—my best quality I believe—that the character of an adviser, a woman of influence, a probable preserver or improver of the *national morals*, is exactly *the very last* I could fill decently. People judge of me by a course of conduct which has been a right one because it has been entirely passive, guided and prompted by him whom I have lost, through many bright years now ended! For myself I am beyond anybody gifted with *l'esprit sur l'escalier*—always just too late with a bright thought—never able at the first important moment to decide or even see justly. If I am able (which I dread and tremble to think I may not prove) to conduct myself tolerably well, to keep out of incessant scrapes from indiscreet words and irresolute blunderings, so that I can return from Windsor to my quiet and cross-stitch at Hagley with a tolerably easy conscience, I shall be thankful and surprised. I am afraid that knowing all this I ought to have refused entirely—but I trust I may be helped in my new trials. . . . I have actually tired myself with talking about myself.

I must add a word less egotistical. Are you not mistaken in thinking “*our morals deteriorated*”? Are they worse than in the days of Lady Melbourne, Lady S., and all that was *fostered* (I meant no pun) by Devonshire House of fifty years ago? Would such monstrous irreligion be now professed, before ladies and children, as used to be professed by Crauford, James, Crowle, and Mrs. Howe? Would your beautiful *belle mère*¹ be now so rare and striking an exception to all around her, in her “majestic modesty” (so like Lady Bruce) as she was in her youth? I know so little of the world, I may be mistaken and not you. But I should be sorry to lose my hope that we are better and not worse. . . .

¹ Elizabeth, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of the third Duke of Marlborough. She died in 1831.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 3, 1838.

. . . To begin at the end, I am more comfortable than yesterday ; had a wretched *unkedness* of a morning at the inn, which seems so long ago that I can hardly bring it to mind. Then arrived, and found Mme. de Lehzen¹ very kind and helpful. Then was shewn up a long winding staircase to my room, an apartment which certainly, if apartments could *faire le bonheur*, would make anybody happy. . . . The wind is whistling round the old grey walls and the sun brilliant ; it is all beautiful. I went down to luncheon with all the lords and ladies, and then the Queen appeared, and I had my embrace, and followed her to her carriage, where she and the Duchess of Kent and Lady Mary Stopford (a nice little red-haired old maid, quite a fixture at Court) and I drove off at a great rate to pay a morning visit to the Duchess of Gloucester at Bagshot. I had sundry things to carry and many non-senses to do ; blundered and boggled as usual. The Queen is perfectly kind and civil and good-natured. At first, however, the restraint and peculiar frame of society here was very disagreeable to me, but I have I think got into it, and feel settled into a proper stiffness. The Duchess of Gloucester² was delightful, and it was a pleasant visit. The Duke of Cambridge staying there. There is such heartiness and seemingly endless good temper about all the Royal Family to judge from manner and look, it is nice to see them. We of the household staid in one room, while the Queen was with her family in another, and she staid long, and sang to them, and seemed quite snug. On our drive home she read a *lesson-book*, Sir Robert Walpole's life by Coxe, very attentively and goodly to herself —a pleasant thing, as it saves conversation. Duchess of Kent struggling with sleep, but not quite conquered.

¹ For many years the Queen's governess. She lived on at Windsor till 1842.

² Mary, fourth daughter of George III., widow of her cousin, the last Duke of Gloucester, great-grandson of George II.

After our return nothing to do till dinner. . . . Mr. Murray¹ came, all honey and smiles, to tell me a real piece of news which astounded me. George, your brother, is actually fixed upon to be one of the examiners for the Newcastle scholarship at Eton in 1840! Just what he had most wished for as the summit of his ambition some years ago. It is, as all his honours are, quite unprecedented, and will give a great fresh gilding to his classical frame. Then Mr. Murray quoted Johnson, talked of "human nature," of Eton education, and sundry things he thought suitable to my fancy, and glided away to talk otherwise with Miss Anson, who is very pretty, but did not sing. . . .

The following letters are written to her daughters and to the Misses Pole-Carew, nieces of Lord Lyttelton, who lived at Hagley after the death of their parents :

Lady Lyttelton to the Misses Pole-Carew.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 5, 1838.

. . . As to you, my nieces, I would have you know the Queen remembers seeing you, eight years ago, as she also remembered the Worcester music meeting. So much for her memory, which as well as Her Majesty's eyes, nose and ears, nothing escapes ever. I have had a most amusing morning's work, accompanying their Serene Highnesses of Oldenburg to see the collection of plate downstairs—also the kitchen, also the pantry, larders, scullery and confectionary. The plate is, I believe, the finest in Europe. A large room, with a table in the middle, and guarded by stone walls, and arched ceiling, and three massive double locked doors, in which are just £65,000 worth of knives and forks and spoons, besides thirty-six dozen of plates, proportionable dishes, and a perfect load of ornaments for the table (four among these, by no means the best,

¹ Afterwards Sir Charles Murray, K.C.B., son of the fifth Earl of Dunmore (1806-1895), extra Groom-in-Waiting to the Queen, afterwards Minister at Lisbon.

cost £11,000 each), all of richly gilt silver, besides the shield of Achilles in gold, and a heap of candelabra, one of them weighing three hundredweight. All in this room was silver gilt, looking like pure gold. "Silver was nothing accounted of in the days of King Solomon" was in my head the whole time. Then the next room contained most curious splendour; cups of crystal, mounted in diamonds and rubies, chased vases of Benvenuto Cellini's work. A huge tyger's head, *entirely* of pure gold, as large as life and finely sculptured, and a peacock, of good size (not natural size or nearly; but not small), *entirely* of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, upraised train and all! which last belonged to Tippoo Saib, and was taken at Seringapatam. The kitchen with twenty-four cooks and seventeen pieces of meat roasting, and the confectionary, a very world of jellies and jams. Then we attended the Prince and Princess and baby and *femmes* and Count Tolstoy to the carriages. Such a dear nice creature the Princess is, all fairness and grace and *Gefühl* and *mutter treue*, without any affectation. The baby took a rage for the Queen, clawed at her, and crowed and laughed and spluttered the minute she saw her. They say all babies do—her dignity is quite thrown away upon them. I am more and more easy with my fellow-servants, who are all good-natured, and some pleasantish. But dinner is still barely endurable from stiffness, and evenings very heavy, and Baroness Lehzen sits farther off from my exalted rank I think every day, and I am sadly by myself and pinnacled up, with only one tight little hand over my head! . . .

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR,
October, 1838.

. . . I am having a great pleasure, a visit (to end to-morrow) from the Duchess of Sutherland,¹ p.p.c., before she goes abroad. She is so kind and pleasant with me, and so good and sensible in all her opinions and conduct, that it has been a great comfort to me.

¹ Harriet, daughter of the sixth Earl of Carlisle and wife of the second Duke of Sutherland; at this time Mistress of the Robes.

I can talk to her as I can and ought to talk to no one else—quite *à cœur ouvert* about everything *chez nous*—and I shall feel very fond of her hereafter, I see. I am *getting on* very comfortably with everybody. The maids of honour (Miss Lister and Miss Paget) are very coaxy and wheedly with me, and nice creatures both of them. “Lady L., *mayn’t* I walk *just for once* by myself on the slopes? I know it’s against the rules, but what harm *can* it do? We *used* to be allowed, but now Lord Melbourne won’t let us. I’m sure we *never* have met anybody there, except once only Mr. Van de Weyer, and what could that signify? *Pray* let me.” (Says Lady L.: “No, no.”) Then another time a gentle knock: “Lady L., *may* I go out? My feet are *so* cold, poking up in my room all the morning! I will only go on the Terrace, and keep quite in sight. *Pray* let me.” (Says Lady L.: “Yes, yes.”)

My *business* is properly to look after these maids, and to do the honours of the Castle to strangers, according to their dignity. This gives me plenty to do all day, but very agreeably, and much is interesting and curious that I have to see and listen to. . . .

Sunday Evening, October, 1838.

. . . I mean but a short letter to-day, my dearest children, having had a goodish day’s work. Twice to church, and after the last having walked as fast as was at all convenient just an hour on the Terrace and round the great *parterre* with the Queen. A most beautiful sight and sound it was. The crowds of people!—among whom the Queen walked, hardly able to get along at first, they press up to her so. *Il faut la voir* tripping up towards a thick-set row of men, women, and Eton boys, as smiling and spirited as if *they* would do her no harm, till at last they fall back and make way for her. Her courtiers just tap them back as she gets close. Then the scene! The castle on one side, with the great standard over it; the view on the other; and around us the garden, the *jet d’eau*, and all under the influence of the *very* finest military music; and not least pleasing to me, Mme. de Lehzen’s pale face (the only face I ever see that seems to feel what is going on *at all*), with her usual half-anxious,

smiling, fixed look following the Queen from one of the castle windows. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 15, 1838.

. . . We have just parted with the Ashleys,¹ to my regret on the whole. They are a very interesting *ménage* to watch. A very sensible and most highly principled man, full of useful good qualities, having married his beautiful wife and taught her all the good she could not learn from her mother. So that, from being a flirting, unpromising girl, she is grown a nice happy wife and mother. Her manner is perfectly unaffected and good-humoured—not, however, to me a very pleasant one; but it is pleasant to see her in every sense. Then their two eldest boys are very dear creatures, seven and five years old, most lovely to behold in their green velvet frocks and long, perfumed hair. Their beauty is most striking; and not wonderful, considering both parents. And they are all spirits and naturalness, and so tractable and well trained! The Queen had them to play with her for an hour in the corridor Saturday, and I quite enjoyed it. They had neither Nurse nor Mamma with them, and were most funny and good, throwing great balls at us, and then screaming, “*Queen!* look, I have killed the Lady!” Having first declined playing at ball—“I don’t think it right *in a palace*; I might hurt something”—and talking with such spirits of “lessons with Papa, reading, and saying by heart.” I am glad to have made acquaintance with the family; it is pleasant to think about.

. . . I am changing my opinion a little of Mr. Murray. He really is so excellent in his office, and his manner is unchangeable, and one gets quite used to its softness, so as not to suspect it. Also, he looks, I find, by daylight full thirty-five, rather bilious, and all the better for his place. Calls the maids of honour “my children,” and seems to lend a hand in the universal pursuit of keeping them in order. Not that they are

¹ Anthony seventh Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885), the great philanthropist, married in 1830 Lady Emily Cowper, daughter of the fifth Earl Cowper. Anthony, the eldest son (1831-1886), succeeded his father as eighth Earl. The second son died in 1849.

disorderly inclined, poor little things, but there is a painful recollection of doings in the last reign, which makes everybody *over-careful* now almost. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to Lord Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 23, 1838.

. . . Now I have to tell you that the Earl¹ is safe and sound. Found him arrived and in all the elementary anxieties about white neckcloths, and shorts, and handings-in, and pages, and waiting-rooms, which belong to one's first days here, when I returned from my airing yesterday evening. So I waited on him in the York Tower, where he is lodged, amidst yellow satin and plate glass, and we had a long talk till it was pitch dark. I never saw him looking so well. He and I have just been round the state-rooms and the private ditto; and now Lord Melbourne has sent for him, and he is to ride with the Queen at three. I hope they will not find him overbearing when he gets to Holkham. He seems to like us all very well. I did not like his being put to play the evening rubber with the Duchess of Kent instead of sitting at our table. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR,
October 25, 1838.

. . . We are *alone* now, several ton weight of Royalty having departed. The day before yesterday we were twenty-eight at dinner, and, considering that the Duchesses of Kent and Cambridge, the Princess Augusta of England and the Princess Augusta of Cambridge, beside the Duke of Cambridge,² were of the number, it speaks well for the rafters and joists under the dining-room that we should not have gone through. The Duchess of Cambridge³ is an agreeable woman, clever and well informed, and her conversation more intelligent than is usual.

Lord Melbourne⁴ seems amazingly at his ease, not-

¹ Lord Spencer.

² Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, seventh son of George III., and father of the late Duke, died in 1850. ¹

³ Princess Augusta of Hesse, Duchess of Cambridge, died in 1889.

⁴ Lord Melbourne was at that time Prime Minister.

withstanding my brother's treacherous supplanting of him. I don't wonder at the lies, when the *Globe* announced his visit here exactly as if it had been political. I should think it would be hard to displace Lord Melbourne by any intrigue, constitutional or otherwise, while her present Majesty lives, unless he contrives to displace himself by dint of consommés, truffles, pears, ices, and anchovies, which he does his best to revolutionize his stomach with every day. . . .

This is the last letter of interest during Lady Lyttelton's first waiting, the next is from Buckingham Palace :

February 28, 1839.

. . . We had a great dinner yesterday (twenty-two). The Dowager Lady Cowper,¹ Lady Fanny Cowper, Mr. Spencer Cowper, Mr. William Cowper, Lady Ashley (*née* Cowper)!!! *Coopers* enough to mend all the butts and hogsheads in the world! The consequence was a very dull dinner. I had, however, the pleasure, which is immense, of looking at Lady Ashley, before whom all other women look muddy and dirty and old (her sister I think barely pretty, begging the world's pardon). I don't mean they are dull people, observe —though I can't *like* any of them, except Lord Ashley, as members of society—but so many of a family must spoil conversation.

The Queen says *gold* open, not *goold*; also *Rome* open, not *Room*. Also Prussia in my way (she was accustomed in childhood to the other way), rhyming to Russia, in spite of the Dean of Chester. When she became Queen, being very anxious to pronounce right, she asked the Ministers about the word, and they decided in my way; the Duke of Wellington also; and Her Majesty complied. She is particularly pleased at being reckoned an authority about accent, and takes great pains about it. . . .

¹ Lady Cowper, widow of the ninth Earl, married, secondly, Lord Palmerston. Lady Fanny Cowper married Lord Jocelyn, eldest son of the Earl of Roden, in 1841. Hon. Spencer Cowper, afterwards married the widow of Count D'Orsay, and died 1879. Hon. William Cowper, afterwards Lord Mount Temple, P.C. (1811-1888); married Georgina, sister of Lord Tollemache.

Spring, 1839.

. . . I went to the play last night to see and hear the very stupidest of all dramatic efforts, "Farinelli." . . . After it we had the lions,¹ and it is a fine thing to see. "The fear of you all shall be upon every beast of the earth" was expressed by every part of the scene. Then the man's courage is very fine to see. I suppose some day the familiarity will go a step too far, and he will leave his head in the lion's mouth by mistake. *Au reste*, going to the play in this private way is very pleasant, sitting and in shawls all the time. If Her Majesty would wear less than *four* different wraps (all to be taken care of and put on), and go there without a bouquet, *and* a bag, *and* an opera-glass, there would be no difficulty at all. But she continues quite patient and kind, and very nice altogether. . . . Both our maids [of honour] are ill. Miss Cocks² has had leeches twice, and is shut in her room often. Her cousin,³ Miss Stuart, comes and sits with her. Very beautiful she is; I quite enter into the world's opinion there.

Here there is again an interval till the day after Lady Lyttelton returned to Windsor for the third time.

WINDSOR CASTLE, *August 24, 1839.*

. . . Here I am, at Windsor; very pleasant. We arrived, covered with dust, after a full-speed journey, in time for luncheon yesterday; and after eating it, and getting brushed and shaken, we set off on a drive which lasted till dressing-time—such a drive as Windsor only can furnish, I do believe. The day quite perfect; the views and the *feel* enough to make anybody, however sick or sorry, happy and well. The Queen and Princess Victoria⁴ and Duchess of Kent

¹ Van Amburgh's menagerie, which was very popular at this time. Lord Broughton, in his "Reminiscences," tells us that the Queen ordered three or four performances.

² Miss Cocks was daughter of the second Lord Somers, and married the Rev. the Hon. Frederick Courtenay in 1849.

³ Louisa, daughter of the first Lord Stuart de Rothesay, afterwards married the third Marquis of Waterford in 1842. Throughout her life she was a striking personality, and exceptionally endowed with artistic gifts.

⁴ Princess Victoria of Coburg. Married the Duc de Nemours in 1840.

and one of the Princes went first, and their beautiful carriage and four white ponies, attended by grooms in scarlet and many gentlemen riding, were a great ornament to the foreground. Lady Charlotte [Dundas] and Mlle. Fennyvesci and I came next, and then Lady Harriet Clive and the rest of the party. After dinner "young and old came out to play" at the Queen's favourite dancing game. (Lord Lilford sadly stiff this morning.) Duchess of Kent waltzed. All did pretty well, but there really were too few to be quite right. It was in the Red Room, and they began by the "Gays Loisirs." "Ah, Lady Lyttelton," said the Queen, "this room, this music—an't it like *old times?*" Meaning the Ascot week and the Czarewitch. Her notion of old times and mine are not quite the same, to be sure; and hers is so youthful—quite prettily so when one considers how it will change.

Yesterday at dinner the English servant who hands round the dishes, calling them by French names, offered me what he called "Fricassée de *Valets*" (*volaille*). I thought Lord Lilford would have died. . . .

Parliament was prorogued on August 27. Lord Broughton, in his "Reminiscences," says: "The Queen delivered her speech admirably, but not in quite so strong a voice as usual."

LONDON, August 28, 1839.

. . . The prorogation was very fine. Beyond my expectations, though the House of Lords is a shabby poky little place enough, compared to the old burnt down one. The day was glorious, till after all was over, when we had a deluge. The finest moment I thought was while the Queen, dressed in crimson velvet and ermine, advanced through the entrances and passages, at a slow pace, *alone*, preceded and followed by all the Court and Ministers. Lord Melbourne (who begins to look picturesquely old) with the Sword of State. The Blues and Beefeaters and all the splendour of her entourage lining her path, and loads of full-dressed people looking down from every place where they could stick themselves. All this in the light of a dazzling sunshine, and to the sound of a great number of most royal trumpets, *in unison*, quite close to us, and a fine bass accompaniment of cannon outside.

The trumpets were, I thought, quite sublime. Then her speech was most beautifully read. Her voice is, when so raised and *sostenuto*, quite that of a child, a gushing sort of richness, with the most sensible, cultivated, and *gentlemanlike* accent and emphasis. She raised her head, and uttered, "Gentlemen of the House of Commons!" with a little air of grandeur that was very pretty. She was frightened, but no one could have guessed it; *we* knew it by the crimson colour of her face and neck, and a little trembling. The effect of the whole is to my taste spoilt by the shoals of ladies and the very few peers who have room. It looks like a mere pageant, and would be much finer if she (child as she looks) were speaking evidently to a crowd of grey-haired senators and sturdy statesmen.

My duties turned out unexpectedly important and arduous, and frightened me much. After the Duchess of Sutherland had changed Her Majesty's robe, with the help of the dressers, *I* had (in the library as it is called, a great room adjoining the body of the house), in presence of the whole Court, and surrounded by all the great officers of State, to unpin and remove from Her Majesty's head her diamond diadem, and taking the great Crown of England (weighing 12 pounds) from some grande (whom I did not see very distinctly) to place it and *pin it on* with two diamond pins through the velvet and her hair at the back of her head! Feel for me! All this I did however pretty well. But when I had to do it all over again in reverse, on Her Majesty's return, she was in a hurry, and the *last* pin I *could* not find the proper place for in the diadem, and first ran it against her royal head (upon which she looked up with a comical arch look of entreaty), and then could not put it in at all anywhere. So she went without it. Luckily it was by no means a necessary circumstance. It has furnished a most invaluable story against me to Her Majesty, and two good *bons mots*. On returning to the palace, of course I made an immediate confession to Mme. de Lehzen. She answered, "Oh, do not mind! Do not *care a pin for de pin!* All deed so well, it does not matter at all!" And at dinner when the Queen told Lord Melbourne the story, saying, "To be sure, it *was* very nervous for poor Lady L. to do it before so many people all look-

ing at her, and never having done such a thing before." Lord Melbourne most wittily answered: "Your Majesty might have said, as Mary Queen of Scots did on the scaffold, '*I am not accustomed to be undressed before so many people, nor by such attendants!*'" Wasn't it very clever? Such a perfectly apposite quotation, and so comically applied. Mary Stuart of course you remember was disrobed by her executioners. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
August 31, 1839.

MY DEAREST GIRLS,—Here I am again, you perceive—among all *mes délices*, delighting in making a fine big W to begin my date. I must say poor dear Windsor Castle looks as ill as it ever can, and promises to be as dull—pouring, mizzling, and miserable. The Queen, hearing of the weather on being called, turned over and took to the royal pillow for another half-hour. I hope she found none of its notorious thorns. I have a great pleasure in view. Lady Harriet Clive,¹ like a dear little woman, offers, and is accepted, to take me on September 17 all the way through London by Birmingham by rail road in her own carriage, letting our maids travel by the public first class. Isn't that very kind and nice? She is an excellent creature, her only fault being a pretty one, a little over delicacy and refinement of mind, a little too far removed from Pickwickism and Irishism, which makes me feel very coarse when talking to her. Talking of Irishism, an Irish gentleman said, speaking of this rainy season, "The winter is come to spend the summer here," which I think excellent—not quite a bull.

Prince Augustus² sat by me at dinner yesterday and was quite agreeable! He is *the* man of lead you must know, but I happened to ask him a question in desperation about bear-hunting in Hungary, and he talked away about the bears and the spears and the forests and the bees and the traps and spring guns,

¹ Daughter of the last Earl of Plymouth, afterwards Baroness Windsor in her own right.

² Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg, nephew of the Duchess of Kent, became a Major-General, and married Princess Clementina, daughter of Louis Philippe, King of the French.

putting me in mind of "Foreign Field Sports," and then of his *escadron de cavalerie*, and how he longed to be among them at Pesth, and how he hoped to "*me faire aimer du soldat*." I think he will be a hero. But how unlike an English youth! He had just been distressed by a letter from Hungary, telling him of the death of his favourite *nightingale*, and the loss of his little tiny lap-dog!

Lady Harriet Howard (who is not the least in the world going to marry Lord Clements,¹ nor ever thought of such a thing), having always had a great turn for writing, has drawers full of little works of her own, on history, religion, etc., and her father, happening to read "*Gideon*," by no means the best of them, had it privately printed for friends. It was admired, and she consented to publish it for a charity. The produce has been £900, and a fresh edition is just wanted. . . .

Sunday, September 8, [1839].

. . . On Friday evening our guest King and Queen arrived.² She is a most captivating creature, far from pretty, very low spirited still, after her favourite sister's death some months back (the Duchess of Wurtemburg, Princess Mary of France). But so graceful, so simple, so sensible a manner I never saw. As to him he is a very majestic personage—very fit, *as to looks*, to have been the husband of the two first Princesses in Europe, and the chosen King of two kingdoms—Greece and Belgium. I got into a titter yesterday at the number of Kings and Queens. One had nothing else to make way for. His Majesty seems sensible and very gentlemanlike, but more especially imposing, melancholy and dignified. I am rayther afraid of him somehow. . . .

WINDSOR,
September 10, 1839.

. . . Our party grows more and more splendid—two Queens, a Royal Highness and a Serene one drove out

¹ Lord Clements, subsequently third Earl of Leitrim, was murdered in Ireland in April, 1878, together with his coachman and secretary.

² Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, King of the Belgians. His first wife was Princess Charlotte of Wales. He married secondly Princess Louise, daughter of Louis Philippe.

yesterday in a pony carriage and four, and were attended (besides our coachful of Ladies-in-Waiting) by a cortège of horsemen, among whom Lord Surrey¹ appeared almost plebeian by comparison; a King, three Princes, besides Esterhazys and Aerschotts and all manner of grandeur one stumbles against every minute, and to-day the Queen Dowager comes to lunch. I am rather tired and very much *en l'air*, and disgusted with myself for it. Dear Lady Harriet [Clive] has caught cold, which vexes me. I rather envy her gentleness and steady even spirits, but she is as far *from* as Miss Spring Rice tries to be near *to Irishism*, and I am ashamed of myself before her.

Yesterday, on the clattering return home from the drive, all the horses foaming and gasping, after a steady gallop of two and a half hours, *our* carriage got neglected; no groom was ready to open the door, and our *dooty* being to get out instantly to attend our Queens, we felt distressed. But without our calling anyone, the two Princes, Augustus and Leopold, perceived our state, and you should have seen with what grace they sprang from their horses, rushed to our carriage, opened the door, let down the steps, and helped us out in a single *Augenblick*, and then such pretty bows and speeches! I wonder what Englishmen would have thought of such a thing! . . .

WINDSOR,
September 12, [1839].

. . . My waiting seems very long this time—has been sadly too gay and exciting somehow. I feel so sick of being beautifully dressed and talking French, and running up and down stairs, and curtseying. (Lord Fingall² and I agreed yesterday we *will not* curtsey and bow to each other when we meet *at luncheon*—having breakfasted together, mind. We have caught the trick from Count d'Aerschott.)

Did you read of our yesterday's trip in the *Globe*? It is all true. We went to Woolwich to see the Coburgs off—and a glorious fine day and an only too

¹ Afterwards fourteenth Duke of Norfolk.

² Ninth Earl of Fingall (1791-1869). At this time a Lord-in-Waiting.

interesting excursion it was. Arriving at the dock-yard, received by hundreds of sailors and mob, all clustering about the shore, and the anchors, and the cannon, and the shipping. And then getting into boats, to the sound of a royal salute close to us, and a deafening tearing cheer from the whole coast and ships. And then a sad scene on board the steamer, to take last leave. The two young and pretty girls both sobbing over each other, and the poor Duchess of Kent hardly able to let go the hand of "my bruder," old Prince Ferdinand, and the graceful *wehmüthig* manner of the two Princes on their last bow and kissing hands. It was quite throat-lumpy. The Queen quitted them at last in the cabins below, and went up on deck to return to her boat. Old Sir Robert Otway¹ and all the officers of course very fussy to assist Her Majesty in getting down "the ship's tall side." But no such thing! With her little face still all swoln with her recent floods of tears, she looked up with the greatest spirit, and said quite loud and silvery, "No help, thank you! I am used to this," and got down the ladder like an old boatswain. She said afterwards to me, "I was quite glad to find myself in a *ship* again —the first time since I came to the throne. *I do like ships!*" I, of course, said how happy I was to hear a Queen of England say so. I hope she will go afloat some day. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Robartes.²

WINDSOR, November 3, [1839].

. . . Our review would have been beautiful had the weather been decent. But as it was the rain did stop for the time. I went with the Duchess in a close carriage, so wrapped up in expectation of the open one, I thought anyone but me must have fainted. The Queen looked better than ever I saw her, in a smart *chacot* [shako], with plenty of gold about it, and the Windsor uniform riding habit, and the beautiful blue ribbon, and (I believe) the Star of the Garter over all.

¹ Admiral Otway, a distinguished naval officer, was made a Baronet at the coronation of George IV.

² Miss Juliana Pole-Carew, Lady Lyttelton's niece, married Mr. Thomas Agar Robartes in 1839. He was created Lord Robartes in 1869. She died in 1881.

She rode a fine white horse, who stood as still as a sofa all the time, after she had very gracefully cantered up to the troops and ridden along between the lines. The salutes she returns *à la militaire* by raising her hand to her cap. "The most fascinating thing ever seen," said Sir John Macdonald. The Duchess of Kent was in a sad worry for fear the Queen should catch cold or Lady C. Barrington be knocked up (she was the only lady on horseback), or at least that the riflemen should wet their feet. This last alarm I did at last laugh her out of. The Rifles were much the prettiest part of the review. Their very dark uniform made the solid squares of them look like thunder-clouds, flashing out lightening on all sides. . . .

The Queen was just engaged to Prince Albert, but the engagement was not yet announced. He was present at this review, riding by her side. It is curious that there is no mention of Prince Albert or the engagement in any of Lady Lyttelton's letters, perhaps from discretion.

Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Robartes.

WINDSOR CASTLE, November 5, [1839].

. . . We have now Prince Ernest¹ among us—very thin and hollow-cheeked and pale, and no likeness to his brother, nor much beauty. But he has fine dark eyes and black hair, and light figure, and a great look of spirit and eagerness. There! I hear his voice in loud laughter as he walks on the terrace.

November 7.—Count Kolowrath again my neighbour at dinner! My heart sank when he came—so very dull! We have quite reached *le bout de notre français et de notre Allemand*, and I can't help suspecting from a certain look in the corner of his eye and tip of his moustache that he quizzes me finely the moment we part. Perhaps he don't, however. He has been ill—"Le climat!"—and so he banyanned upon lobster salad and chocolate cream, washed down by deluges of champagne. . . .

¹ Elder brother of Prince Albert, afterwards Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR,
November 8, [1839].

. . . The Cambridges arrived yesterday, and enriched our dancing evening. Queen's headache quite gone, luckily, for it requires a sound head to listen to the Duke. . . . I was so *bestürmt* with questions, one hundred in a breath, close to my eye, by the Duke on his first arrival that I was fairly bewildered, and answered, "Yes, Ma'am." After dinner, during the dancing, he came and sat by me, and to be sure how he did shout and cross-examine! but he never wants any answer, so it don't matter. "Where do you *habitually* reside, Ma'am? Oh, Hagley—you *did* live there. I see, I see—your son lately married¹—how long? a few months? I understand. Now where do you mean to live? At Richmond for the winter? Oh, I see! Where have you been since your son's marriage? Leamington? Why to Leamington? Oh, your brother—I understand! Your brother, Captain Spencer! I remember—I perfectly recollect. A naval man, I believe. Yes, I saw him in 1825 at your father's in the Isle of Wight. Yes, yes, I know—Frederick Spencer, to be sure! Your father-in-law, Mr. Poyntz? No, surely not so, Ma'am. Oh, *his* father-in-law? Oh, I see, I see," and so on for half an hour. I was quite out of breath with listening, and could hardly stick in a word in answer here and there, and all as loud as a very sonorous voice can reach. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
November 9, [1839].

. . . The Cambridges are gone, and the Castle is still as death, for want of the Duke. Think of his asking *me* if I had "any commands" to town? Think if I had told him I wanted a small parcel carried! He shouted on to the last, singing the quadrilles while they danced, and "God save the Queen" while we dined, rather than be silent. . . .

¹ Lord Lyttelton married Miss Mary Glynne, daughter of Sir Stephen Glynne, of Hawarden Castle, on July 25 this year. Her sister Catherine married Mr. W. E. Gladstone the same day.

On January 27 there was a debate on the allowance to be made to Prince Albert. Lord John Russell proposed to settle £50,000 a year on him, but Colonel Sibthorp's amendment to fix the amount at £30,000 was carried. On the following day Sir J. Yarde Buller moved a resolution of want of confidence in the Government. It was to this that Sir George Grey,¹ then Judge Advocate-General, spoke. The resolution was defeated, after four days' debate, by 308 to 287.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

LONDON,
January 29, 1840.

. . . The debates and divisions about Prince Albert have not come off well certainly.² It is a bit of a lesson on English ways for him at starting—very good for him and his wife too, if they know how to profit by it. Everybody says there has not been for many years so fine a speech in the House of Commons as Sir George Grey's last night.

. . . Last Saturday poor dear Mrs. Bridgeman³ died. . . . I can't help being set thinking by the nearness as to time of my dear Aunt's⁴ release from this world's trials and hers. They were once gay friends in the world—just *out* the same year; both (though in different degrees) pretty, lively, and popular. One goes back to that time, and one thinks of many such pairs of happy and thoughtless young ladies; and then *le revers de la tapisserie!* the most truly bright of the two sides, in fact. . . .

¹ Sir George Grey was afterwards Home Secretary under Lord Palmerston. Sir E. Grey, now (1912) Foreign Secretary, is his grandson.

² The discussions on the annuity to be granted to Prince Albert and also in regard to his status as an Englishman. The Government proposed a grant of £50,000 a year, but it was eventually reduced to £30,000.

³ She was a Miss Poyntz, cousin of Lady Lyttelton.

⁴ Lady Anne Bingham died the following March, after a long illness.

92, EATON SQUARE,
[February, 1840].

. . . I have just taken an hour's walk, all about *our village* (we all call it so); called upon neighbour Carlisle¹; met her girl Betsy (her that has picked up such a nice situation with the young parson Grey); admired many a voluminous aristocratic baby, all over merino and swansdown, and many a quiz of five years old, looking as little like a human being as rob roys and feathers and ringlets and long gaiters could make it. . . .

¹ Georgiana, Lady Carlisle, daughter of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. Lady Elizabeth Howard, married the Rev. F. Grey.

CHAPTER XII

1840-1841

ON February 10 Queen Victoria was married to Prince Albert in the Chapel Royal of St. James's Palace. In the following November the Princess Royal, afterwards the Empress Frederick of Germany, was born. Early in 1841 Lady Lyttelton went for a tour of two months in Italy with her two daughters; and later on in the same year there are accounts of royal visits to the Duke of Bedford, at Woburn Abbey, and to Lord Cowper, at Panshanger. There are frequent allusions in the letters in these chapters to the weakening of Lord Melbourne's Ministry, which came to an end in 1841, as recorded in Chapter XIII.

Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon. W. H. Lyttelton.

FORTHAMPTON,
February 21, 1840.

. . . As to the Queen's marriage, truly I had not much to add to the newspaper account which was very full, and for a wonder, I think, quite correctly true. Being a compound part of the procession, I, of course, saw very little of its effect, and especially was prevented by the portly forms and finery of the Duchess of Bedford and Lady Normanby, who walked before me, from seeing the Queen and her trainbearers at all; and they were said to have formed much the most striking part of the show, in their pure and simple white dresses. They looked like village girls,

among all the gorgeous colours and jewels that surrounded them. The Queen's look and manner were very pleasing ; her eyes much swoln with tears, but great happiness in her face ; and her look of confidence and comfort at the Prince as they walked away as man and wife was very pretty to see. I understand she is in extremely high spirits since. Such a new thing for her to *dare* to be *unguarded* in conversation with anybody ; and with her frank and fearless nature, the restraints she has hitherto been under from one reason or another must have been most painful. . . .

Sir Stephen Glynne, ninth and last Baronet, was brother of Mary, Lady Lyttelton, and of Mrs. Gladstone. He was a distinguished ecclesiologist, and his knowledge of English churches was probably unequalled.

EATON SQUARE,
Saturday, [June, 1840].

. . . Yesterday the dinner was an unheard-of party. L. L.¹ and I and Sir Stephen *en trio* ! There was plenty of conversation, which, after varying a little, settled of course into churches, till his pairing off expired at half-past nine. Then I, having foolishly bought a *Globe* that was bellowed about, sat down to a regular study of *Cur-was-here*,² as I am sure his name is pronounced by all the cockney witnesses, till I went to bed expecting to see a naked man with a *couteau de chasse* at the foot of my bed. . . .

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

September 29, 1840.

. . . As to Miss Estcourt, believe me I do not in any degree regret or wish away your friendship for her ; on the contrary, I am more and more sure it is a real advantage and blessing to you, my good child, and your conversations with her I sincerely approve. I only wish I was half as good as either of you. But I still do not repent of all I am often saying to the

¹ Lavinia Lyttelton.

² "Cur-was-here" is Courvoisier, the Swiss valet, who murdered his master, Lord William Russell, by stabbing him in bed this year.

disparagement *in general* of great intimacies among young ladies. We are all so full of vanity and egotism, so ready to be flattered and glad to be able to talk of ourselves to a too indulgent hearer, and a girl has in general so many little over-feminine interests and anxieties and so few real matters of importance or profitable moments to occupy her that it is well to be silent often, when conversing would be pleasanter, or busy, when a confidential lounge is very tempting indeed. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
September 30, 1840.

. . . Here is my old date once more! I find, as I expected, a *very* quiet time. . . . The Queen looks in very good health, and is very active; out walking before ten this morning, and seeming determined to bear up and complain of nothing. . . . She was very kind—asked much after you ladies three. Sarah Mary¹ very fat and rosy, and Miss Cocks quite sprightly and graceful, are pictures of maids of honour, and flit and skip about the castle very prettily. The Lord Poltimore is the Lord-in-Waiting, and looks his part with due solemnity. Poor old Sir Robert Otway is here, so is Sir Edward (I believe) Bowater,² talking much of the Guards—so much that I really believe in the course of dinner he and I actually got through all the sentences usually uttered on the subject. . . .

CLAREMONT,
October 2, [1840].

DEAR CAROLINE AND CO.—. . . A prosperous journey of eighteen miles brought us here yesterday. My fate was a *tête-à-tête* with Lord Poltimore³ in a close carriage. (Pray find out for me some of you, *who* in the world he *is*; what's his name, who's his wife? It might possibly enliven our intercourse a very little.) This is an extremely pretty place; stands on a high knoll, overlooking a distant view with a forestry

¹ Sarah Mary Cavendish, afterwards Countess of Cawdor.

² General Sir Edward Bowater served in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, and was appointed a Groom-in-Waiting to the Queen in 1846. He died in 1867.

³ George Bampfylde, first Lord Poltimore. His first wife was Miss Sneyd, his second the daughter of General Frederick Buller.

fore-ground. The house is a very handsome private chateau, and it requires all the pages and scarlet footmen one runs against to prove it a palace at all. Sir Robert and Lady Gardiner,¹ who live hard by, dined here, and the evening turned out unexpectedly pleasant. By the way, I was pleased to hear the Queen making pointed inquiries, as if she had done so before too, about the school here—how the master got on? if it was well attended? etc.—like a country lady. Prince Albert seems so very fond of the place, so full of admiration of the neighbourhood, that it quite accounts for their frequent visits here. It is really delightful and quite touching to observe him and his wife—so happy, such an increasing pretty happiness it seems! Not a look, not a tone of hers but expresses the most respectful confiding affection. It is the most perfect wife's manner one can imagine, and he is, if possible, more ingenuous and sensible and gracious than ever; and then he is as happy and as cheerful now as he looked dull and sleepy in London. It is only that the poor man likes nothing but *das Landleben*,² and she is so complying towards him that it may lead her to like it too at last. This place is full of memorials of the former occupiers,³ and reminds me often of November 6, 1817. I trust there is no cause for thinking of that awful day with any anxiety! All the portraits of Princess Charlotte and what I have heard of her from Lady Gardiner make me think she would have been rather a dangerous Queen of England—very harsh and imperious at least.

Oh dear! Didn't I wrap up Her Majesty at bed-time last night in my shawl, and wrap up myself in Her Majesty's, and so contentedly we went to our rooms! This morning brought the treason to light. The Queen is *en retraite*, being the funeral day,⁴ and dines alone with the Prince. I suspect not *very* sadly; so we shall have a dull dinner indeed! . . .

¹ General Sir Robert Gardiner served in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. He afterwards was appointed Governor of Gibraltar.

² Country life.

³ Princess Charlotte and her husband. She died on November 6, 1817.

⁴ Of Princess Augusta, daughter of George III., who died September 22.

October 5, [1840].

. . . The Queen shows country tastes by this liking of a really simple country house, where she walks alone with her husband. Called on Lady Gardiner so, and was extravagantly delighted because the footboy at the garden gate, having said Lady G. was not at home, added, "Won't you leave your names?" not having any notion he spoke to the actual Ocean Queen and her Lord. The gardener meanwhile had come near and explained; upon which the poor footboy took to his heels, and it is believed *il court encore*. . . .

. . . Dear George,¹ he will do right to thunder against non-communicating. But when the house is so very full for the week before the sacrament and for the actual Sunday, the poor maids have rather a case to make out. It is right that they should require a little leisure time for preparation. The evil there, is the rarity of any communion. *In a monthly sacrament church* a quiet time may always be chosen. But a monthly sacrament at Hagley would probably be a *tête-à-tête* of parson and clerk when the family is away. So there is no knowing what to do. . . .

Yesterday Lord Melbourne and I had to follow Her Majesty, and we agreed entirely in an unfashionable preference of a close landau to an open one, much to the Queen's amusement and to my warming through; for I had dressed expecting an open carriage *obbligato*, and so had he. But we somehow found room, tho' his lordship sat upon half my cloak, and he is so unwieldy I did not like to fidget him up again; so we were a kind of mass of wadding, fur, and broadcloth not often equalled. He was so sensible and good-humoured I liked it. He is looking as old as the hills, but quite well. . . .

Lady Lyttelton's brother Frederick had gone abroad with his family for six months, and Lady Lyttelton and her daughters were also planning a tour in Italy, though there were rumours of a war with France over the Egyptian question. The four Powers who had taken the Eastern question in charge—England,

¹ Lord Lyttelton.

Russia, Prussia, and Austria—had addressed an ultimatum to Mehemet Ali, ordering him to evacuate Syria. France stood aloof from this action, and Mehemet Ali was compelled to obey by an Anglo-Austrian force, which stormed St. Jean d'Acre. The fear of a war with France was averted.

Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR,
October 8, 1840.

. . . This morning brought me Fritz's last letter, written yesterday after his carriages were on board. I was much saddened by receiving the letter. It feels like a break up of a very serious kind, and brings to my memory many a ship sailing, and wheels rolling away, and dreary leaving behind; along with a very useful dreariness, thinking of our own going, if ever it takes place. Everybody says, "Of course you will not think of going if there is war!" But I know we *shall* think of it; and war, alas! awful and gloomy, is, I fear, setting in and closing round us at last—a war of sad bitterness, awakening half-subsided black passions, and likely to be most angrily and hardly fought. It frightens me to see the spirited looks and clenched teeth and to hear the angry words of all military men when even its chances are talked of. "They want a good thrashing, and they shall get it." "In the *right*? To be sure we are! Who ever heard of a clearer case? No, no; if the French chuse to run against us they may repent it," and all manner of such speeches. Of course, only when the Queen is safe out of hearing. So that I sometimes wish "my weary eyes could find a peaceful hermitage," and get into some deaf and blind corner out of the way. But I dare say if I did find one I should soon come out of it. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 9, [1840].

. . . Only think! I have got a place for William Waters. Such a place as never was—footman to Lady Poltimore. Lord P. has actually engaged him, if he



CAPTAIN THE HON. FREDERICK SPENCER, R.N.,

AFTERWARDS THE FOURTH EARL SPENCER.

To face p. 302.

is not himself averse, which I suppose impossible. Lord P. says Lady P. is "not at all the sort of person to have a standard height for her footmen. Of course, when she dines out, it *is* absurd to have Robin Hood and Little John behind one's carriage; so if he should be *very* unlike the other in height, he may not do for her in spring; but at present a good character is all Lady Poltimore would require." Lord P. must be as rich as he is reported to be. He gave £1,000 for Lady P.'s three *morning* coach-horses, and seems the image of wealth and serenity. Yesterday evening, as I was sitting here comfortably after the drive, by candle-light, reading M. Guizot, suddenly there arose from the rooms beneath oh such sounds! It was Prince Albert—dear Prince Albert—playing on the organ, and with such master skill as it appeared to me, modulating so learnedly, winding through every kind of bass and chord, till he wound up into the most perfect cadence and then off again, louder and then softer. No tune, and I am too distant to perceive the execution or small touches, so I only heard the harmony; but I never listened with much more pleasure to any music. I ventured at dinner to ask him what I had heard. "Oh, my organ!—a new possession of mine. I am so fond of the organ! It is the first of instruments—the only for expressing one's feelings—and it teaches to play—for on the organ, a *mistake!* Oh, such a misery!" and he quite shuddered at the thought of the *sostenuto* discord. . . . The Queen was cold (as indeed had long been all Her Majesty's loving subjects and servants then with her) the other evening—the great drawing-room having but one of its fires burning, and few people in it. She said, "I am sadly cold. I should like the other fire lighted." Then low to me, "Tell Lord Poltimore to go and ask the Prince if he would like the other fire lighted." Of course the Prince did like it, but the thing tho' small, struck me as a pretty bit of *wifeism*. . . .

October 10, 1840.

... The Queen is sitting for a picture to a Mr. Partridge, and yesterday I was so struck with the Prince's manner. He came into the painting room from shooting; his hair all blown about his ears and

his colour heightened, looking so handsome! and the way in which he half bounded up to her as she sat in her high fauteuil, and took her hand with the most graceful, smiling bow! May their feelings but hold, through all the trials of both their trying lives! It is dreadful to hear dry old worldly-wise people sneer and predict that "ten years hence will make a difference in H.R.H." I really hope and expect not. He seems too good to be seriously spoilt. Lady Leicester¹ was thrown from her horse three days ago, and broke her leg, a compound, jagged fracture, quite hideous! She is suffering agonies, but they hope to save life and limb. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October, [1840].

. . . Lord Poltimore goes away to-morrow, but Lord Aboyne² comes. They say he is rather *slang*, a bad change, for Lord Poltimore is very gentlemanlike. His delight at going back to his son, a little baby,³ is pleasing. He says he had never left him for three hours *in his life* before. He is a tall, fine-looking man of fifty-three. Colonel Wylde, by the way, is a very clever man, spirited and scientific, and, having seen a great deal of the world, just the man to be about the Prince. The freedom of all their manners to him is very pleasant to see. . . .

[October 13, 1840].

. . . Lord Palmerston comes to-day with his family, so, I hope, do Lord Melbourne and Lord John, and I can't tell who besides. A large party will be no unpleasant variety, though the small has been of some use in familiarizing me a little with the Royalties, which helps me in shawling and pinning duties. It does more than that. It makes me feel more towards the Queen—more of the admiration and wonder which some parts of her character excite, more of the affection which others naturally inspire, and more, alas! of the regret, and compassion, and hopelessness, and helplessness which many circumstances of her education

¹ Lady Anne Keppel, wife of "Coke of Norfolk," first Earl of Leicester.

² Afterwards tenth Marquis of Huntly (1792-1863).

³ The late Lord Poltimore (1837-1908).

and present position and future fate fill one with. I am also struck the more, the more I know, with the immense falsehood of many of my early Court notions, which must sink yet deeper the dent at the top of my head, where self-esteem ought to stick out. The Queen is most particularly kind to me all the time, and the Duchess too. Poor soul, *she* was in floods of tears in her room yesterday morning, at the news of the Queen of Portugal's¹ dangerous confinement and its bad result as to the child; and I had to go over many commonplace matronly consolations. She sent for me to see her cry and try to comfort her. The Queen, of course, was as brave as a lioness upon the occasion, quite cheerful in her general manner, and, when she alluded to it privately to me, expressed only much feeling for her cousin, and especially for her cousin's husband and his anxiety—nothing like a selfish fright. . . . Lady Constance Paget² is so much improved, that yesterday morning I thought I had seldom seen greater beauty, and her manner, also, is much prettier than it was. I wish there was a fine portrait of her. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 14, [1840].

. . . We dine at half-past eight, and go to bed at eleven—which I fancy is not wholesome. Our company is pleasant. Lady Palmerston is in beauty, also Lady Fanny [Cowper], and the former in great agreeableness and grace. The band began again at dinner, to my great delight; also played many new German airs—a *pasticcio* of all styles. First a “Church choral,” which the Prince pointed out to me; it preceded a military movement, ending in waltzes. “*That* part is the best to *my* taste,” said the Prince of the Church part. It does one good to see Prince Albert’s real love for music coming out when he is at his ease. The Queen admired it all very meekly. She is learning trees and plants; and in a very pretty and childlike manner, when last we walked, told me quite gravely and low, half-shy, “That, Lady L., is a tulip tree, you

¹ Queen Marie; wife of Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, Duke of Saxony.

² Daughter of second Marquis. Lady Constance married the eleventh Earl of Winchilsea in 1846, and died in 1878.

see—a rare tree, but yet hardy—we hope it may succeed, though it is rather large to be transplanted." Last year she did not know an elm from an oak. "Love rules the Court, the Camp, the Grove." . . .

Lady Lyttelton told her daughter that she was one day talking about somebody to the Queen, and, without thinking, used the expression "as happy as a Queen." She caught herself up, but the Queen said, "Don't correct yourself, Lady Lyttelton; a Queen *is* a very happy woman."

October 18, 1840.

. . . We have had a raw, windy, lead-coloured Sunday terrace walk; got home just before it began to rain, when up flew all umbrellas, and away marched bands and listeners, and now nothing is left but the evening breeze sweeping over the yellow woods rather drearily. . . . Looking at a spirited rough little sketch of Islay (pronounced *Isla*), the well-known Scotch terrier, Lady Palmerston addressed us all with her usual graceful serenity and rather grave voice, with these words, very slow: "It is so exactly the character of *Victoria's* head"—I very nearly went off, but she leisurely corrected herself, and no one smiled. . . .

Lady Lyttelton, writing about a reckless action performed by some man, and an unskilful operation from which he suffered, says: "Never was such a man, or such surgeons, except Lady Leicester's, who have now had to undo and reset her wretched bones for the *third* time!"

. . . We had a coursing-party yesterday—too stupid always, and my wishes for the hares are so troublesome, I could hate Prince Albert for having a greyhound. Only then, at dinner, the incomparable band of the 1st Life Guards played, quite to admiration, a piece of solemn choral music, which one saw people all round the table stopping their talk to listen to and feel—so perfectly different from the usual style; but it was, indeed, most beautiful, and the Queen called to

me in a low voice and with a great blush, “Don’t you like that? It is composed by the Prince;” and I forgot the greyhound. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 20, 1840.

. . . The Clarendons stay till to-morrow. Lord Clarendon¹ seems a very clever man, but his manner is consummately disagreeable to me—so very *bitingly* sarcastic and sharp. His wife is far different—a nice, simple, good soul; sensible, too, and very amiable altogether. I have not seen the baby,² six weeks old only!

. . . The Prince showed us all of them [some caricatures] last evening, running from one to the other, and standing over us to see how we laughed, and laughing so loud himself as to be quite noisy and boyish. But his voice! It is sadly disenchanting! . . .

[In another letter]—Lord Clarendon is the most brilliant conversationalist, I think, of all that one meets nowadays; but he is faulty in manner, and seems a mere man-of-the-world, like most of the rest of men. . . .

WINDSOR,
October, 1840.

. . . The Prince suddenly flew off coursing on foot, with the three greyhounds, leaving his wife very patiently and happily waiting for him within the slopes a long time, very damp and dark, and Miss Murray getting crusty for fear of a cold; but the Queen as meek and nice as could be. Then at bed-time the Queen, evidently much tired and sleepy, won my heart over again by saying to me, “Tell Lord Alfred to let the Prince know that it is eleven o’clock” (he was at his everlasting double chess, very deep); “tell him the Prince should *merely* be told the hour. The Prince *wishes* to be told, I know. He does not see the clock.” And quite fussy she seemed for fear of a disrespectful message or anything like a command being sent. . . .

¹ The statesman. His wife was Lady Katharine Grimston, daughter of the first Earl of Verulam, and widow of J. F. Barham, Esq.

² Lady Constance Villiers, afterwards Countess of Derby.

*Memorandum of a conversation of Prince Albert
with Lord Wriothesley Russell.*

[Prince Albert expressed] great anxiety about Chaplains—that they should be gentlemanlike—fit for the Palace. “Their presence does so much to raise the tone of society.”

Before the birth of the Princess Royal, Lord Wriothesley¹ asked if a prayer for the Queen’s peculiar circumstances should be added. The Prince said: “No, no; you have one already in the Litany—‘all women labouring of child.’ You pray already five times for the Queen; it is too much.”

Lord W.: “Can we pray, sir, too much for Her Majesty?”

The Prince: “Not too *heartily*, but too *often*.”

The Princess Royal, afterwards Crown Princess of Prussia and German Empress, was born on November 21, 1840.

Talking of the arrangements for the Princess Royal’s christening, Lord W. said: “Mr. E.² has composed a new anthem for the christening. When should it be sung?”

The Prince: “Not at all—no anthem. If the service ends by an anthem, we shall all go out criticising the music. We will have something we all know, in which we all can join—something devotional—the ‘Hallelujah Chorus.’ We shall all join in that with all our hearts.”

Lady Lyttelton and her daughters went to Italy in 1841 for two months.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lord Lyttelton.

ROME,
March 23, 1841.

. . . I shall not tell you many details of our sightseeing, only that we are in undiminished enjoyment

¹ Lord Wriothesley Russell, son of sixth Duke of Bedford. He was a Canon of Windsor.

² Probably Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Elvey.

of everything. We are a great deal in society, which is, of course, small and quiet, being Lent, but which we don't find at all hindering to our real business. . . . The person I like much the best among them all is Mr. Hope,¹ Mr. Gladstone's friend, and a worthy one, which says much. I am in great admiration of him, tho' he is rather awful, from Puseyism and abilities, and often says things I much disagree with.

Alas, what bad public news there seems to be gathering! It makes one rather seriously political. We may be on the brink of a downward course, after long glory and prosperity. This, however, is, I dare say, only my usual unsanguineness, or at least will be so considered. . . .

The foregoing allusion is to the tottering state of the Whig Ministry, and the growing deficit in the revenue, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer tried to remedy by proposing a fixed duty on wheat. This was defeated by a large majority; Lord Melbourne, however, remained in office even after Sir Robert Peel carried a vote of want of confidence in the Government, and it was not till July that the Whigs appealed to the country and were beaten. Lady Lyttelton continues:

. . . Dissolution expected; Ministers not going out unless forced by the new Parliament; and the joke is, "Why is Lord Melbourne like a *very* serious young lady?—Because he won't go out *at all*." "Ministers have a great deal of patience, but no resignation." Sydney Smith said this, but I think it is old. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

May 29, 1841.

. . . Fritz and Co. arrive to-day at Dover, all well, after a passage of three hours. Lord S. dined here yesterday, but actually left town at 5.30 this morn-

¹ James Hope, afterwards Hope-Scott, the great Parliamentary Counsel. He eventually became a Roman Catholic.

ing to breakfast at Althorp—the very day of Fritz's coming! It is “to see the sheep just out of the wool after shearing.” “But won't you come back to see Captain Spencer?” “No.” Of course, all in good friendship between them, only being *odd*!

We mean to go on Monday night to hear Mlle. Rachel, a famous French actress, who plays “Andromaque and Phèdre,” to the improvement of all the world, and also recites in private sometimes. . . . Kitty¹ has got a footboy to go her errands and walk after her—“something in the shape of a man.” She is as happy as the day is long, singing as loud as ever she can, and routing among her sisters. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
July 6, 1841.

. . . My departure from London was very bothering. My last hour was half eaten up by a very pleasant visit from the Duchess of Sutherland. I have an actual *cœur gros* on recollecting that she must resign, alas! and leave us to some odious new Duchess. . . . However, off we got at last, having had my first peep at the Princess Royal just before we left the Palace. She is a fine, fat, firm, fair, royal-looking baby, sitting bolt upright, and too *absurdly* like the Queen; grave, calm, and penetrating in her look, most gentle and sweet-tempered. She wore a very plain white pelisse of muslin, and a droll little Quaker-shaped straw bonnet; no bows or bustle about her, and she surveyed us all most composedly for a minute. She was shewn at her carriage-window to all the standers-by, and it was amusing to us who followed to see the universal grin left upon all faces after their look at her. She will soon have seen every pair of teeth in the kingdom. They say she laughs, crows, and kicks very heartily, and the Prince tosses her often.

No company is here, except Ministers, but the Belgian Royalties—the King, indeed, not till to-day; he is gone on his annual visit to Claremont.² The lovely-mannered Queen Louisa is attended by the liveliest, most good-natured, hearty old body I ever knew; I am already quite fond of her. I mean the

¹ Miss Catherine Pole-Carew.

² Where he and Princess Charlotte had lived.

Countess Vilain XIV.! Who ever had such a name to get over?¹

July 8.— . . . This puts me in mind of a pretty little *mot* of Mme. Vilain XIV.'s saying yesterday, about her Queen. The Duke of Brabant² is not quite well, though a fine, healthy child. So I asked Mme. Vilain how he did, adding that the Queen did not appear to be anxious about him. “*Jamais la reine ne s'inquiète. Elle en paraît incapable. Elle se resigne, ou bien elle se confie!*” And this said of a person who looks the living image of humility, and whose grace and politeness, and patience and cheerfulness, are said to be founded on the deepest piety, was quite affecting. I am glad our Queen has caused her Uncle and Aunt to stay on till Monday. It is quite a pleasure to look at the Queen of the Belgians and at the Queen of England, between the two people whom, next her husband, she loves best. She turns from one to the other, as if quite overflowing with affection to both. . . .

WINDSOR,
July 7, 1841.

. . . I have often preached apropos about the unwholesome effect of office. So in candour I must mention that Lord Palmerston³ is in the constant habit of rowing for two or three hours before breakfast, and also of bathing and swimming in the Thames at the same time of day. He came from this latter performance this morning as fresh as a—no, I beg a rose's pardon!—but as an old river-god, to his customary hearty meal. . . .

July, [1841].

. . . I went in the Queen's carriage yesterday, for the first time, with Lady Palmerston. I enjoyed it from watching her and the Prince, who rode a fine horse alongside, and was so delightful! Leading the

¹ The origin of this name is due to the loyalty of a M. Vilain in the reign of Louis XIV. When granted a favour by his Sovereign, he asked permission to add the numeral XIV. to his name for ever, in memory of “le Roi Soleil.”

² Afterwards Leopold, King of the Belgians (1835-1909).

³ Lord Palmerston was at this time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and fifty-seven years old.

drive through every beautiful turn, which he knows as he does every tree, and cantering up to point out “a fine swarm of bees just settling on that bough,” and then some talk about the queen-bee and their ways; our Queen listening like a good child, and answering “How curious!” and asking little questions. And then we got to the larger paddock, where his Arabians and their foals and his fine hunters were galloping about; and he brought them up to shew her, and she was so worthy! knowing them all by name, and seeming to long to get a gallop herself. And then pointing out the magnificent scarlet geraniums, seen through the glass of the Conservatory, and rather begging the Queen to alight and go in to see them better. She could not, being engaged at the Castle by a particular hour, but refused very gracefully and kindly; and I envied for her the simple tastes and pleasures, and happy, active temper and habits of her husband. . . .

July 25, 1841.. . . The Castle is occupied by the Princess Royal and the Court, Lady Portman, Lord Fingall, Sir Frederick Stovin,¹ Mr. Murray, and the Baroness² and Miss Pitt. . . . Lady Portman³ arrived, arrayed in her usual “majestic modesty” on Saturday. Such a creature as she is! I don’t know what she is like—gentler than a swan, livelier than a dove. Every day she does something to make me admire her more. She is to see the Princess twice a day, and write to the Queen about her daily. . . .

The Queen and Prince Albert paid a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Bedford at Woburn Abbey.

WOBURN ABBEY,
July 27, [1841].

. . . Well, our journey yesterday was very pleasant through a most rural country, all our English beauty, and plenty of bells ringing and village bands playing, and wreaths and arches of flowers, in a brilliant sun-

¹ General Sir Frederick Stovin (1783-1865), who had served in the Peninsula, was a Groom-in-Waiting.

² Baroness de Lehzen.

³ Lady Emma Lascelles, daughter of the second Earl of Harewood. She married the first Lord Portman in 1827.

shine. Some moments were touching, such as when the military escort was dismissed, and fifty or sixty farmers in stout broad cloth and new hats, with white favours in their buttonholes, and famous fine horses, took to galloping alongside the royal carriage. It looked most English and popular. And as we heard one say, "a monstrous pretty woman the Queen is!" I hope Her Majesty looked gracious, though the dust they kicked up was quite smothering. Our courtly party was very merry in the *following* carriage. Mr. Anson having begun by, quite unintentionally, knocking off Lord Headfort's¹ hat (always worn with a jaunty *tapageur* slant on the *top of his hair* (suspected of being partly false), and it flew many yards behind us, and we flew away from it a good way before we could stop to get it picked up. Then Lord Headfort sat down for a good while on a basket full of currants put into the carriage for luncheon! Most fortunately for his attire, the basket had previously got upside down, or he would have got out a pretty figure. His Irish brogue screams on these misfortunes were excellent, and we all laughed so much we must have passed for merry courtiers. Not so in the evening! How dull! Bless me! We are eleven of us, Dukes or Duchesses, and most dukefully dull indeed we are. The Queen must carry away with her a strange idea of what society and conversation mean. The material is all very fine. That is, the place is handsome, the house most comfortable and huge, and the dinner also, after a great and unconcealable effort, contrives to be *almost* as sumptuous as our daily fare at Windsor. The pomp and glory of courts and nobles don't wear well; one need not think of their end or be at all philosophical; one need only witness plenty of it, to find out it is nothing. . . .

WOBURN ABBEY,
[July 28, 1841].

. . . Our time is going off pleasantly enough. Yesterday evening was vastly better than the former. Miss Masson sang, accompanied to the utmost perfection by Puzzi, who contrived to play as the finest man's voice would sing, and all in the next room; it was divine.

¹ Thomas, second Marquis (1787-1870). He was a Lord-in-Waiting.

The Queen was pleased, and did her part well, getting up when it was over, and going into the music room to compliment the Masson, whose downcast eyes and loyal simperings were worth seeing. Then we had a few noble-minded *Curtiuses*, who heroically devoted themselves and partly stopped up our gulph of dulness. Lady de Grey¹ performed with Lord Melbourne a regular *pas de deux* argument on political economy. She was graceful and he was clever, and it killed us a good twenty minutes. Lady Palmerston helped also, by carrying on a successful intrigue, which led to one or two Duchesses actually getting up from the awful round table and walking about the room. It seemed to give one air and breath.

We had been all over the house and then all about the park in the afternoon. The former was interesting ; ought to have been more so, but the Queen seems always afraid (like a girl just out of school) of asking questions about pictures and portraits, for fear of being thought ignorant, so the part of the business she liked best was peeping into everybody's own rooms, which are, indeed, the most comfortable and best arranged imaginable, and worth admiring. The park is fine, from great trees and long drives, not picturesque or beautiful, but very handsome and grand. To-day we have had an address from the county to receive, and are now going to drive again. The Duchess of Bedford² does the honours with so much humility and sweet temper and kindness it is a pleasure to see her, and I am getting to think I shall not be *so* glad to be back at Windsor as I had expected. . . .

July 29, [1841].

. . . The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, a burly squire, brought the county address to the Queen at Woburn yesterday. It was read in full saloon to her, from a white satin copy by His Honor, who, having been used to spectacles (which I find are forbidden by etiquette before royalty), could not very well perform

¹ Lady Frances Cole, daughter of the first Earl of Enniskillen. She married Earl de Grey in 1805.

² Lady Anna Maria Stanhope, daughter of the third Earl of Harrington. She married the seventh Duke of Bedford in 1808.

his part. The Queen's answer was a relief. She read it most enchantingly, her pretty emphasis and half smile to the Duke, as she uttered "the noble and patriotic house of Russell," made his eyes glisten, and the good-natured Duchess had to hide a tear or two behind a geranium. The Sheriff delighted everybody, on being admitted to luncheon with us all, by declaring to someone afterwards that he considered the Duchess of Somerset¹ to be the handsomest woman he had ever met with. . . .

On leaving Woburn the Queen and Prince Albert went to Panshanger, Lord Cowper's place in Hertfordshire. Lady Lyttelton writes from there, Thursday, July 29, 1841:

. . . Our departure from Woburn was, like all the visit, managed very hospitably and kindly, and *j'emporte* a very high respect and liking for our noble host and hostess. *Here* we are quite in a different climate. It is a *recherchée*, exclusive, fine and *tirée à quatre épingle*s party—rather young too—and I am sadly shy, tho' only this very morning I was thinking how totally unshy I was! It will go off, I have no doubt. I don't tell you the guests; of course the newspapers do, which I never see. The Duchess of Sutherland is here, which is always a full relief of Court duties to me, she having all the responsibility of attendance, and Lady Cowper² is a good-humoured body, and the place has all the natural beauty one could wish, and a very admirable house with a really magnificent collection of Italian pictures in high condition—a Raphael, a Correggio, a *Fra Bartolommeo*! two Andrea del Sartos, and the most beautiful and uncommon Carlo Dolci; besides other very fine ones, a huge Rembrandt portrait of Marshal Turenne! It feels like being in Italy. We yesterday had a very noble part of the Duke of Bedford's park to drive through—and then we all walked through menageries,

¹ Margaret, daughter of Sir Michael Shaw-Stewart, wife of the eleventh Duke of Somerset.

² Daughter of Lady de Grey. She married the sixth Earl Cowper in 1823.

and aviaries, and dairy, and farms, and a glorious garden. There never was a place so complete. I forgot a tennis court and riding house. . . .

While she was staying at Panshanger the Queen drove over to luncheon with Lord Melbourne at Brocket. Lady Lyttelton wrote of this visit :

The people never saw the Queen so well as there. Lord Melbourne had stationed them in crowds of thousands, I should think, close by the garden walk, and he led the Queen straight up to them, and all were most respectful and quite delighted. I feel odd on having almost from every garden some choice flower committed to my special care by Her Majesty (who used not to know a rose from a thistle), to put it into my book of pressed flowers.

This visit is very agreeable, surprising from absence of formality, contrived by Lady Palmerston and her daughter-in-law. The only fault is that they are immensely unpunctual, and make the poor Queen wait for dinner and drives till anybody but herself would be furious. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

1841-1844

DURING 1839 and 1840 the power and prestige of the Whig Ministry had been gradually waning. Their attempts at Reform of Education and of the Corn Laws had fallen short of what their extreme followers had expected. Sir Robert Peel brought forward a vote of want of confidence, which was carried on June 4 by a majority of one. Lord Melbourne thereupon dissolved Parliament and appealed to the country, with the result that his followers were badly beaten at the polls. In August he was defeated by a majority of 91 on an amendment to the Address, and Sir Robert Peel was called upon to form his second Government.

In it Mr. Gladstone, somewhat to his disappointment, was offered the post of Vice-President of the Board of Trade. He wrote : "I was totally ignorant both of political economy and of the commerce of the country. . . . In a spirit of ignorant mortification I said to myself at the moment : the science of politics deals with the government of men, but I am set to govern packages ;" but in the end he accepted the offer.

In April, 1842, Lady Lyttelton was appointed governess to the Royal children, and Lord Mel-

bourne's comment on the appointment was that "he was most sincerely of opinion that no other person so well qualified could have been selected."

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

MILVERTON, September 2, [1841].

... Long life to the President of the Board of Trade! The lists in the papers are horrid, so unlike one another, and as to the Court I think it must have been a hoax upon the county paper that I saw yesterday, promising us Lord Wilton, the Duke of Beaufort, Lord Chesterfield and Lord Alvanley to improve our society. I shall tremble for my character among such beaux. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE, September 30, 1841.

... Lady Jocelyn's¹ appointment I regret on many accounts, the chief being that I am sorry for her, a bride, becoming so separate from husband and home already. The Queen has, however, said very kindly that she will often ask Lord Jocelyn, and that the waitings shall be mostly in London. But it does not suit my views of *honey year* habits at all, and I am afraid for that handsome *ménage*. The Queen looks upon it as a nice sugar-plum for herself to have her dear Fanny belonging to her quite. . . .

Played at *écarté* last night. It is now for money, and I won sixpence, which the Queen paid very honestly. A round game was played lately, after which Miss Paget had to pay Prince Albert two pence sterling, which she did, first washing them with yellow soap for his royal hands. The Queen in particularly placid cheerful spirits, and it is a pleasant waiting I think. The dear babekin came down yesterday to be introduced to the new Ministers, and to Lady Ashley's two boys, whom H.R.H. much preferred. She is really going to be quite beautiful, such large, smiling, soft, blue eyes, and quite a handsome nose and the prettiest mouth, and her countenance and complexion are beautiful. Lady Peel had tears in her eyes when

¹ Lady Fanny Cowper married Lord Jocelyn in April this year. She was appointed extra Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen.

talking her over. They all looked surprised. I am sure they expected secretly a blind Miss Biffin.¹ . . . Lord Byron² is a great comfort, so uncourtly and naval it does one good to see him. . . . I have just seen the lace trimming made at Honiton for the Queen's wedding dress. It cost £1,000. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 5, [1841].

. . . The Provost³ and Dr. Hawtrey dined here yesterday. I got no acquaintance with either, though Dr. Hawtrey and I looked unutterable things at one another. He made a great many *curtsies* to the Queen, and one very clever answer with which she was more struck than I ever saw her at anything really clever. She often spoke to him, and once said, "Who is in your opinion the cleverest boy now at Eton?"

"If I was to answer that question, Madam, I should make more than 600 enemies." Very good, wasn't it? and quite ready and quick. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 6, [1841].

. . . The Princess hid her head under the nurse's arm yesterday, and on the Queen peeping round to see why she did it, H.R.H. was detected in that safe corner sucking her necklace, which is forbidden. Then the Queen said, "Oh fie! naughty! naughty!" upon which the child looked slyly at her, and held up her mouth to be kissed. It is lucky another is coming. The Queen is, like all very young mothers, *exigeante*, and never thinks the baby makes progress enough or is good enough. She has her constantly with her, and

¹ Miss Biffin was a well-known person of that day who had no hands, but used to paint with brushes tied to the stumps. A rumour had been circulated that the Princess Royal was blind. These and other untruths made Prince Albert induce the Queen to publish an official Court Circular daily soon after their marriage, which has continued ever since.

² George, seventh Baron, and an Admiral, cousin of the poet, extra Lord-in-Waiting.

³ Dr. Francis Hodgson was then Provost, and Dr. Hawtrey Headmaster of Eton College.

thinks incessantly about her, and seems also more and more devotedly fond of the Prince. . . .

WINDSOR,
October 12, 1841.

. . . The Queen reappeared at dinner, I rejoice to say, yesterday. We had to weather a dreadful Sunday evening without her (at least *I* had). Our only guest being the Duke of Wellington, and as the Duchess of Kent and Prince Albert were both in attendance on the Queen, and the whole Court (about twenty people) took to playing at spillikins, puzzling with alphabets, and whispering in corners, I had the pleasure for more than an hour of being stuck up, bellowing and being bellowed at, *tête-à-tête* in the middle of the room, conscious that everybody was listening and criticizing during my long dialogue with the mighty hero. I never was so thoroughly frightened, and I went to bed with a headache. His Grace is extremely good-natured and simple, and much of what he said I like to remember. He talked of Buckland¹ and Oxford, and I asked him where he had seen him; so he began praising him and his discoveries and works, and added: "I was acquainted in France with Laplace and Lalande and the French geologists. But *their* aim was to injure religious belief; *his* has been to establish it. That's a great difference. It is a fine thing that the facts they discovered and published with such a bad intention should have proved at last useful as evidences of the *truth of holy Writ*." The last words in a sonorous, thumping tone. I thought the walls of that room, all things considered, might be rather surprised, and all George the Fourth's profligate books that stand against them might shiver a little. . . .

A few days later Lady Lyttelton writes :

. . . The Queen appears in the sort of health that ought only to belong to such as Lavinia.² I believe

¹ Dr. William Buckland was at this time Canon of Christ Church, and Professor of Mineralogy at Oxford; he became Dean of Westminster in 1845.

² Lavinia Lyttelton, aged twenty. The Prince of Wales was born on November 9.

she could run round the Great Park, and she is in such almost crowing spirits at having *done* the doctors and staid here, that how they are ever to move her I don't know. . . .

EATON SQUARE,
October 20, 1841.

. . . They [Lord and Lady Lyttelton] have put off their departure till to-morrow, and so, as I expected, I was flown at by the Queen to ask whether they would dine with her to-day. So I said I dared say they would, and they *must*. As Mary¹ and Mrs. G. [Gladstone] had been to a double-refined tea-drinking at the Duchess of Hamilton's on Monday night, I conclude she will be fully equal to this. I drove to Carlton Terrace on my way home, to break to them what was intended, and spent a minute of terror at their door, fearing the Cinderella hour was passed, and that instead of my coachman turning rat I should undergo the far worse calamity of seeing Mr. Gladstone turned porter. But happily it had not struck eleven, so though all were gone upstairs, the legitimate butler appeared, and I got out and left a note in their drawing-room.

. . . It is very odd that no *man* can be trusted about young ladies' books. Either they forbid Bowdler's Shakespeare or permit all manner of German "casual coarseness." . . .

October 21, 1841.

. . . The decision about West [a nurse] is under progress—very slow, but sure. The case seems to me to lie in a nutshell or cherry stone, as I told Mrs. Gladstone yesterday; and the doubt remaining, to afford a fresh proof to me of Mr. Gladstone being less practically sensible than profoundly clever. It seems he hesitates only because she is not good enough. "But did you think her quite good enough for your only child?" "Quite!" "Do you suppose a nurse exists who has no imperfections?" "No!" "Then why not recommend her, mentioning her only imperfection, which in the Bishop's family never can be a

¹ Mary Glynne, second daughter of Sir Stephen Glynne, Bart.; married George William, Lord Lyttelton, on July 25, 1839. She died in 1857.

trial—namely, being jealous of *another nurse?*" No answer can be given, and I hope she will be recommended.

The Palace dinner went off very well. Mary half killed with fright and misery ; thinks everything too horrid and odious, except Prince Albert's face. George, entranced with the music, and delighted with all he saw, heard and *ate*. He sat by me at dinner. Dear George, I was so happy to have him near me! The Queen spoke in praise of Mary's beauty and look of youth, and was very gracious to both her and George. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 23, 1841.

MY DEAREST MARY,—Never did I enjoy a letter much more than yours to-day. It gave me such a happy merry breakfast all alone by myself. As to your mistake at cards, if you knew the blunderations we all go through, and how little we mind it under the Prince's smiling and merry-hearted instruction, you would not think any more of it. Last night we learnt a new round game, and all grew quite noisy over it ; it is called *nain jaune*, and is better than *mouche*.

You may guess from what I have said that the Princess is well again ; she had only a little complaint from her teething ; I suspect is over-watched and over-doctored ; always treated with what is most expensive, cheaper and common food and ways being often wholesomer. She now lives on asses' milk, and arrowroot, and chicken broth, and they measure it out so carefully, for fear of loading her stomach, that I fancy she always *leaves off hungry*. Did you read a quotation from some wit book in the newspapers lately, where that rule is criticized, and it is said you may just as well say, "When you are washing, leave off dirty." It made me laugh so much. . . .

BOWOOD,
November 15, 1841.

. . . We are all well, in a heavy snow, in this immense and very comfortable mansion—so full of luxuries, and fine pictures, and amusing books, and

in so beautiful a garden that it ought to be the abode of perfect happiness and virtue. Alas! it is not that certainly, though of the latter good thing there is a great deal. But Lord Lansdowne himself is an unsatisfactory man, and all the attaching qualities of his wife, whom I feel very fond of always, partly from "auld lang syne," can't make one forget his deficiencies, one of them being a want of ease and frankness, which keeps one sadly on stilts, and makes the society about him always stiff and hollow. The sight of Lady Kerry¹ is, I can't say how, deeply affecting. To me, who have known her since her birth, and saw her last in bridal prosperity, and whom she reminds every moment of her dear mother, my early friend in our happy young days, she is indeed a cause of incessant emotion! She is beautiful to a poetical degree—so fair, so noble, so thin and pale, with her bright flaxen hair parted under a plain evening cap, and the deep mourning dress she wears for her brother [George], bringing to mind her late mournful attendance on his death-bed and all the scenes of family sorrow she has gone through. The first evening it was almost painfully interesting to watch her. Since, of course, one had to get down to plain prose again, and to find out that she is quite calm, resigned, and cheerful, thinking only of her nice little girl, and beloved as she ought to be by Lady Lansdowne. Lady L. has just shown me the whole house—passing through *two* beautiful apartments, in each of which she had delighted to arrange every comfort for her two sons in succession when they married. One is dead, the other a widower.

We found here only one guest—rather a formidable one—the Duchess of Hamilton!² I am glad to have at last made her acquaintance—with her in reality. I had always looked at her as a picture. She sang and played last night very delightfully, tho' her voice is like a ghost of one, but her playing is the very essence

¹ Daughter of Maria, Lady Duncannon, and widow of Lord Lansdowne's eldest son. She married in 1845 the Hon. Charles Gore, and was mother of Dr. Gore, Bishop of Oxford. She died in 1904. Her daughter mentioned here, Lady Mary Fitzmaurice, married Sir Percy Egerton Herbert.

² Susan Euphemia, daughter and coheiress of William Beckford, of Fonthill, wife of the tenth Duke of Hamilton.

and soul of inspired music still, and her face, features, and brow looked rather like what I remember thirty years ago, admiring beyond any other, while she was at the pianoforte. We expect Mr. Charles Wood¹ and Lady E. Fielding to-day, and to-morrow I hope we shall not be disappointed by Lady Morley,² fresh from abroad, and Mr. Luttrell.³ It would greatly enliven us. . . .

Frederick William IV., King of Prussia, came to England for the Prince of Wales's christening.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
January, 1842.

. . . The King of Prussia is come; most brilliantly and affectingly received by the people, and magnificently indeed by the Queen. He is established in the State apartments. I have just been gazing at all their tall windows streaming with light across the old Quadrangle, and thought with pleasure he is "ein Genie und ein Christ." And here has been spending half an hour with me, Abeken,⁴ come with the King as his Chaplain. And I have made acquaintance with Bunsen, and with Baron Humboldt, and all the distinguished Germans of the suite—old officers who fought hard in the great war and remember the Battle of Leipzic, and some German noblemen of great names. The Queen breakfasted at nine with the King, and then they walked out together. As the Bishop of London described it, "the Reformed Church was seen on the Terrace." The King is fat and tall, and looks at first sight only plain and like a good-natured farmer; but his eyes are, though small, very observant and piercing, and he talks like a sensible man.

¹ Afterwards first Lord Halifax.

² Frances, daughter of Thomas Talbot of Gonville, Norfolk, and widow of the first Earl of Morley. She was famed for her wit.

³ Henry Luttrell, the well-known wit and poet of society. He died in 1851.

⁴ The Prussian statesman, "Bismarck's Pen."

The Duchess of Buccleuch¹ is as pleasant and does as well as I had expected, and I am quite at ease and *be calmed* by her. . . .

WINDSOR,
January 27, 1842.

[First part lost, King of Prussia speaking.] . . . "Je n'ai senti, depuis mon arrivée ici que joie, toujours joie. Ah! que Dieu bénisse l'enfant!"—which he said with glistening eyes and much feeling. He seems indeed a Christian King—a beautiful sight. The march played after his health at dessert daily is a solemn ancient German air, the name being "Der Landesvater," which Prince Albert had the right head and heart to chuse as the fit music to play in *his* praise. And the King's countenance while it was being played is delightful. He is very ugly, but the expression beautiful, and is as full of fun all the time as a boy. Baron Humboldt is inconceivably agreeable, and inexhaustible in stories and accounts of his immense travels; and all the suite seem intelligent, superior people. My old friends, the Romanist Coburgs, are here; Auguste grown an exceedingly handsome man, Leopold tall and good-looking, and as bright as ever.

Lady Lyttelton was appointed Governess to the Royal children early this year.

February 3, 1842.

. . . I am very sorry indeed you expect a descriptive letter from me; I have not an atom of description to give. My own "personal memories" of the christening consisted in being squeezed very close between the Duke of Wellington and Sword of State and a somebody with an enormous silver mace on each side of me. Before me were numberless "broad backs," and occasionally I could just see half the Queen's head through a crevice between elbows. When the Duchess of Buccleuch set off to do her arduous part, taking the Prince of Wales and giving him up to, and then taking him back from, the Archbishop, she made a little room, and I forced my way into it, so as to see the child perfectly, and also

¹ Lady Charlotte Thynne, daughter of the second Marquis of Bath, wife of the fifth Duke of Buccleuch; Mistress of the Robes.

how well she did it, and how neatly she picked His Royal Highness, mantle and lace and all, out of the voluminous folds of the Primate's lawn sleeves and the dangers of his wig,¹ which it was feared the Prince might have laid hold of and brought away at least on quitting his arms. I did not even see what I heard admired—the Queen's very devout and affecting manner of kneeling quite down, in spite of her cumbrous robes of the Garter, on first entering the Chapel.

I feel rather less wretched than yesterday, one night of solitary responsibility being passed. Lady Isabella is charming, full of kindness and simplicity. The General has a dry humorous fun about him; we have laughed a good deal. The last thing we did before bedtime was to visit the access to the children's apartments, to satisfy ourselves that all was safe. And the intricate turns and locks and guard-rooms, and the various intense precautions, suggesting the most hideous dangers, which I fear are not altogether imaginary, made one shudder! The most important key is never out of Prince Albert's own keeping, and the very thought must be enough to cloud his fair brow with anxiety. Threatening letters of the most horrid kind (probably written by mad people), aimed directly at *the children*, are frequently received. I had rather no one but our own family knew all this. It had better not be talked about; and hitherto it has been kept from me and all of us here. . . .

February 12, [1842].

This morning we had a very pretty and brilliant amusement. The Queen took the Princess Royal, and me to hold her, in the sledge, the Prince driving. The sledge is quite pretty; beautiful grey ponies all covered with bells and sparkling harness; gentlemen attending, and scarlet grooms preceding and following, over the dazzling snow, in the purest sunshine. The cold is awful for the poor and exposed, but wholesome to *us*, the family of Dives! The Queen shewed very nice feeling on our meeting a second time a gentleman

¹ Archbishop Howley (1766-1848). He was the last Archbishop to wear a wig.

and lady in a gig, whose horse had on the first meeting been most dangerously frightened by the sledge. When we met them next, the Queen saw them at so great a distance that I could not at first—the gentleman out and leading his horse. Her Majesty instantly ordered the Equerry to ride or send forward to reassure them, and the Prince drove the sledge to the side of the road, where we waited for some minutes till the gig had passed. I had the mortification to see, when they did pass, the gentleman barely touch his hat, the lady shewing an exceedingly cross face through her veil, and scarcely a bow! tho' I really believe few subjects would have done her such a kindness as the Queen had done. . . .

. . . Miss Brown not come yet. Mr. Brown, the apothecary (a very clever, nice little man), is no relation of hers. Whenever he comes, Princessy insists on my singing "Tom Brown's Two Little Indian Boys," to my great discomfiture. I am obliged to hurry and slur it over as fast as I can before the poor man is quite in the room to hear his name so trifled with. . . .

The next letter is to her daughter-in-law, Lady Lyttelton, who had written for advice on the bringing up of her eldest daughter, then aged eighteen months.

[*Early, 1842.*]

. . . Now, on the subject of Meriel¹ and her crying fits, I can't wonder you are uneasy about them—j'ai passé par là! But there is no occasion, believe me, to suppose they mean *bad temper* at her age. As to checking them, I fancy taking very little notice of them is not a bad thing. I own I am against punishments; they wear out so soon, and one is never *sure* they are fully understood by the child as belonging to the naughtiness. It is odd that the Princess has exactly the same cry of "Wipe my eyes!" all the time she is roaring, and the same "morbid" love of one nursery-maid, as Meriel has for you. That is to be weaned,

¹ Meriel Lyttelton, born June, 1840; married, 1860, J. G. Talbot, Esq., afterwards M.P. for Oxford University.

I think, by a little less fondling her yourself or minding her quite so much. But don't quite cure it!—a *morbid indifference* to you would be far worse. After all, you are the only person to judge and take the right course. I don't know if I ever gave you Mme. Maintenon's advice on the matter: “*Êtes vous mécontente du peu de progrès que font vos filles ? Eh ! n'êtes vous pas assez heureuse ? Traitez les toujours avec douceur, donnez leur un bon exemple. Priez pour elles—et attendez tout le reste de Dieu !*”

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

[BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
Spring, 1842.]

. . . Think of Lord Camden¹ having the Garter! “As much from respect for his personal character as from a sense of his father’s patriotic sacrifice” were Her Majesty’s neatly-ordered words in telling me the news. I must write to congratulate, which I shall do bunglingly, feeling much like Lord Melbourne: “I don’t know how it is—one ought not, perhaps, to say it—but *don’t* you think those *ribbons* are rather over-valued?”—spoken with the peculiar voice and energy he has so awfully outlived. *He* refused the Garter twice. . . .

CLAREMONT,
May 7, 1842.

. . . My pupil and I had a stormy meeting yesterday evening, when I was very kindly and prettily fetched out of my bedroom by the Queen, *en robe de chambre*, to “Come and look quick, Lady Lyttelton, at the most lovely of all rainbows! Pray excuse me coming to you *such* a figure, but I could not delay.” The pleasure of the call and of the sight, which was really sublime, was really spoilt by the screams and unconquerable horror of the Princess at the sight of me. Nothing could pacify her but my leaving the room. . . .

¹ George, second Marquis Camden (1799-1866), succeeded his father in 1840. His father had been Teller of the Exchequer for sixty years, from 1780 to 1840, but after 1812 he resigned the large emoluments attaching to the post. This was the “patriotic sacrifice,” for which he received the formal thanks of Parliament.

In another letter about this date Lady Lyttelton writes :

. . . My little Princess is all gracefulness and prettiness, very fat and active, running about and talking a great deal. She is *over* sensitive and affectionate, and rather irritable in temper at present ; but it looks like a pretty mind, only very unfit for roughing it through a hard life, which hers may be. The Prince of Wales, to judge by his noble countenance and calm manner, is very intelligent, and looks through his large clear blue eyes full at one. . . .

[WINDSOR,
June, 1842.]

. . . There is a great party here, and they are to dine in the Waterloo Gallery and to-morrow in St. George's Hall, and the Castle is quite filled. It is refreshing to see all the ladies in their beautiful summery cool light dresses. The Duchess of Buccleuch yesterday was like a bit of spring sky or a drop of fresh water. By the way, you know Lord Desart's marriage to Lady E. Campbell¹ is declared. Has anybody called her before me "the rose of the Desert" ? Ain't she like it exactly ? Her family are much pleased. . . .

CLAREMONT,
July 10, 1842.

. . . The real delight of this visit is the presence of Archdeacon Wilberforce.² I never saw a more agreeable man ; and if such a Hindoo were to be found, I think he would go near to convert me and lead me to Juggernaut. So it is hard if all who know him are not "altogether" Christians sooner or later ; and I need not add that he never parades or brings forward his serious feelings ; they are only the *climate* of all his mind. It is very pleasant to observe the hearty respect and regard with which everyone here behaves to him. What good he has in his power ! Ten talents, indeed !

¹ Daughter of the first Earl Cawdor. She married the third Earl of Desart.

² Samuel Wilberforce, afterwards Bishop of Oxford, and later of Winchester (1805-1873). He was Chaplain to Prince Albert at this time.

With him to listen to and Lady Canning¹ to admire, I must admit my breakfast was pleasanter than those in London. . . .

[CLAREMONT,
July, 1842.]

. . . Archdeacon Wilberforce is gone, after preaching to us yesterday at morning service a most beautiful sermon. It was in manner and language the highest in eloquence, and his voice and earnest simplicity all the time leave one no wish except that one could remember every word and oh, practise every precept. I was so pleased, sitting close behind Prince Albert, to observe him nodding his head in warm approbation repeatedly, and then turning round gently to see if the Queen was equally impressed. Everybody says he will be a Bishop, and so he ought. . . . I had a very pleasant talk with Lady Canning in the afternoon; she is exceedingly agreeable and admirable in every way, I think—so simple and unselfish. . . .

WINDSOR,
September 23, 1842.

. . . I am sorry and uneasy about Lady Exeter!² I went down to the Queen last evening for something, and she told me this bad news, and seeing I was a good deal shocked, she was so kind! and said directly, “Oh, but perhaps I am overstating what is in the letter. You must see the letter! Where is it? Oh, in the Prince’s room! I’ll go for it.” And tho’, of course, I deprecated, think of her actually taking her little feet out of a *bain de pieds* she was taking, and putting on any shoes she found, no stockings, and all wet, she ran all along her private corridor to the Prince’s room to fetch me the letter! Wasn’t it nice of her? I felt like a second Lord Rolle.³

The Queen’s former governess, Mme. de Lehzen, went back to Germany for good this autumn.

¹ Daughter of Sir Charles Stuart, and sister of Lady Waterford.

² Isabella Poyntz, wife of the second Marquis. She died in 1879.

³ Lord Rolle, a very old man, fell down the steps of the throne as he came to do homage at the Coronation. The Queen rose and went down the steps to save him from falling as he tried to approach a second time.

WINDSOR,
October, 1842.

. . . The Queen has shown much feeling, gentle and amiable, about Mme. de Lehzen's departure. "It was very painful to me, Lady Lyttelton, waking this morning, and recollecting she was really quite away. I had been dreaming she had come back to say good-bye to me, and it felt very uncomfortable at first. I had heard it mentioned before—that odd feel on waking—but I had no experience of it. It is very unpleasant." There is a transparency in her truth that is very striking—not a shade of exaggeration in describing feelings or facts; like very few other people I ever knew. Many may be as true, but I think it goes often along with some reserve. She talks all out; and just as it is, no more and no less. . . .

WINDSOR,
October 12, 1842.

. . . All the afternoon I was out hare-hunting with the Queen, it being the interregnum between Ladies Mount Edgcumbe and Dunmore! I rejoice much to see the latter, but the former is a very sweet lady, and I am sorry she is gone—such a smooth, pretty temper and manner, just like her looks. The Queen said to Princessy: "Two pretty little girls are coming to see baby to-morrow." (Her Majesty has graciously invited Lady Dunmore's daughters.) Upon which Her Royal Highness got upon tiptoe, put her head down on one side, and with the most extreme slyness of manner answered, "Naughty?" "No, no," said the Queen; "they are very good little girls." "Kying?" persisted the Princess. "No, no; they never cry." I can't express the drollery of her questions—so meant to be joking and malicious. She is more and more like a person of four years old. Little Charley Edgcumbe¹ came to see her; and her coquetterie! hiding behind the curtain for him to find her—holding out her frock and dancing up and down before him. . . .

That very ill-developed organ in my head, *friend-cateness*, was gratified by great praise of my dear Sir Charles Bagot² in the newspaper to-day. He

¹ Colonel the Hon. Charles Edgcumbe, born in 1838.

² Governor-General of Canada, 1841. He died in 1843.

is said to be doing wonders—*Liberal* appointments, conciliatory policy, popularity, wisdom, etc.—all done by such a Tory that he must be acting on strong grounds of principle, and not prejudice. . . .

1842.

. . . Oh, dear ! I wish there were no portraits being done of the Princess Royal, and that all her fattest and biggest and most forbidding looking relations, some with bald heads, some with great moustaches, some with black bushy eyebrows, some with staring, distorted, short-sighted eyes, did not always come to see her at once and make her naughty and her governess cross. Poor little body ! She is always expected to be good, civil, and sensible, and the Duke of Cambridge—bless his Royal Highness !—tells the Queen to make it better—that it is very odd the Princess should ever cry ! “ So very odd ! *my* daughters *never did* cry ! nor indeed my son, except when he was recovering from an illness once ; ” and Her Majesty believed her uncle. . . .

Mr. Grant¹ has dropped his airs and graces, and now behaves like any other man of Chesterfield society. He is painting the children well—all for birthday and Christmas *surprises*. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 25, 1842.

. . . I dined down yesterday—had a dull place at dinner next the Premier,² who of course, having the Queen on his other side, could not speak to me, so I had only to watch his finger-tips peeping out of his sleeves and supplying him with an ample dinner. I was struck with the quickness, and watchful, cautious, characteristic sagacity, which Sir Robert shewed in learning and playing a new round game. He was quite like his own public character all the time. The Queen, I am glad to say, was excessively and pointedly civil to him.

Poor Lord Melbourne has had rather an alarming attack of giddiness in the head. He is said to be much better ; but, with his very unwholesome diet and great increase of size lately, I should not wonder if his time

¹ Afterwards Sir Francis Grant, P.R.A.

² Sir Robert Peel.

was but short.¹ He is extremely happy, living with Lord and Lady Beauvale. She is a very amiable woman, and makes herself quite a sister and home to him. Alas! if he had had a real home forty years ago, and a good example before him, one should be looking at his approaching end with happier feelings. But then those allowances will be made in mercy. I can't help feeling that I shall (if I survive him) wear my cousin's mourning with much sincerity, for the strange, inconsistent, but amiable man. . . .

The next letter is written after a journey to Walmer, where the Royal Family were entertained by the Duke of Wellington.

WALMER CASTLE,
November 11, 1842

. . . I have now to report that our journey (103 miles in nine hours, including two quarters of hours spent stopping twice) was without accident. . . . It was, notwithstanding, very fatiguing, owing to the immense crowds, the continual cheers, the fright lest we should smash hundreds at every turn, and all the excitement of wreaths and bonfires and triumphal arches, church-bells and cannons all the way along, while we kept flying and dashing, escort panting and horses foaming, and carriages swaying with speed. The children will grow up under the strangest delusions as to what travelling means, and the usual condition of the people in England! They must suppose one always finds them shouting and grinning and squeezing, surrounded by banners and garlands. "Where's the Prince? Show him! Turn him this way! Bless his little face! What a pretty boy! How like his father!" was screamed at us incessantly; and once, as I was overheard to say to Mrs. Sly, "Hold up the Prince of Wales," I was complimented with "Well done! That's right, old girl!" At one place, where we had got out and were returning to the carriage through a thick avenue of the principal people of the place (I believe

¹ Lord Melbourne died in 1848, and was succeeded by his brother, Lord Beauvale. The unhappiness of Lord Melbourne's married life with his wife, the eccentric Lady Caroline Lamb, is well known. She died in 1828.

Rochester), a great fat lady, very smartly dressed, caught hold of the Prince of Wales, and, almost dragging him out of Sly's arms, gave him the loudest kiss. "Well done! I give you credit for that," said an amiable gentleman of the company. Mrs. Sly has not yet cooled down, her rage was such at being taken by surprise.

This is much what I expected. A big round tower, with odd additions stuck on. Immense thick walls, and a heap of comical rooms of the odd shapes necessary as parts of a round house, built close upon the shingly beach. . . . It seems needless to go out for air, doors and windows all chatter and sing at once, and hardly keep out the dark storm of wind and rain which is howling round. All this outward rudeness mixes very oddly with the numbers of smart servants and courtly whispers and very tolerably got-up imitation of the palace mummeries we have contrived indoors. . . .

WALMER CASTLE,
November 22, 1842.

Princessy was most funny all day,¹ joining in the cheers, and desiring to be lifted up to look at "the people," to whom she bowed very actively, whether in sight of her or not. . . . She was prodigiously dressed up in garter-blue velvet, Brussels lace, white shoes, pearls and diamonds, and looked too comical. . . .

WALMER CASTLE,
November 26, 1842.

The Queen delighted with the China peace.² I hope it may not be brittle like its name. We have, I begin to notice, rather a raised tone of conversation of late—many bits of information, and naval matters, and scientific subjects come up, and are talked of very pleasantly at dinner. The Prince, of course, encourages such subjects, and no gossip has been stirring since we have been here, but many things are said daily which I am sorry to forget. The Prince and Queen are reading Hallam's "Constitutional History of England" together, most carefully, and for a light book "St. Simon's Memoirs." Very pleasant to find

¹ November 21 was her birthday.

² Between England and China. It was signed August 29, 1842.

him reading loud to her, while she was at cross-stitch, as I did the other evening before dressing-time. Oh! what a blessing it is that "Love rules the court" as he does! What a mine of blessings there is, all sent thro' those potent blue eyes! . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
December 4, 1842.

. . . Here we are. Our journey was very prosperous, being almost literally one gallop from Walmer to London, and a railroad rush hither. We arrived at twenty minutes after four, and then came such a regular nursery worry. Mrs. Sly taken ill, with so furious a sick headache that she was obliged to go to bed. Aimée, tho' recovered, not yet allowed to see the children, therefore useless up in her room. One nursery maid detained, as were the maids of honour, and almost everybody's servants and luggage on the train from Walmer, owing to some unexplained blunderation, and all our little possessions, night things, playthings, *rusks*, shawls, etc., left behind in London, to follow by next train, *we* having believed they were coming on with us when we stepped out of our warm littery nursery on wheels, to share the honors of the Queen's special train from London hither, where nothing but royal live persons and their indispensable attendants are admitted. So I and Charlotte and the Queen (who took her full share of the trouble, and even got up and ran an errand for me, of course un-asked, most funnily and kindly) had the sole charge of Princey and Princessy, who were taken with tearing spirits, and a rage for crawling, climbing, poking into corners, upsetting everything, and after a little while being tired, cross and squally for hours, till gradually the most necessary absentee people and things dropped in, and I, more untidy and horrid than a beggar, but easy about the children, came up *home* at last, and enjoyed the great luxury of a nice fire and drawn curtains, and Mr. Sprague,¹ and my reglar fine dinner. . . .

CLAREMONT, 1843.

. . . The Archdeacon² is here. There never was such a pleasant person, I believe. The *report* (it is

¹ Lady Lyttelton's footman.

² Wilberforce.

nothing more yet, alas ! and may be a dream) of his going to be tutor to Princey gains ground. To be sure I should be thankful for it as a real mercy to myself, such a guide and help for me ! Said I to the Queen this morning, " Madam ! Mr. Wilberforce has asked leave to see the Prince of Wales—may he ?" " Oh yes, by all means ; " and then after a little pause, " I think he looked rather ill last night." Upon which the governess had the wit to reply, thinking of her pupil, " Why, Ma'am, he certainly was rather fretful at bedtime." And Her Majesty had meant the Archdeacon, who certainly looked even paler and plainer than usual. Think of the joke against poor me ! I advised the Queen to make a journal of my blunders. . . .

[CLAREMONT,
March 19, 1843.]

. . . I walked out with the Archdeacon, but so did Lady Charlemont, so that I had not the great pleasure of a little conversation with him. His sermon this morning on the blessedness of prayer was such as to leave me quite a rag—what with having a mind to cry, and being stuck up in front of the Court, and wondering whether Lord Sydney would see that I *had* a mind ; whether Colonel Buckley would think the preacher sarcastic ; whether Lady Charlemont would ever take to sitting still, and above all, whether I should be as much the better as I ought for such a stream of heavenly truth, such a glow of honeyed words ! I had cold hands and dizzy eyes and green cheeks and a shaking head after it, I can tell you. This afternoon the sermon was perfectly opposite in style, but equally striking. A country congregation sermon, quite awful in many parts, and, as always, perfectly sound and true and natural in doctrine and manner.

Prince Albert has been building a house with Pezzessy's wooden bricks, to finish which he had to stand on a chair and reach above his head. Such a fall as it made ! He enjoyed it much the most. . . .

Lady Dunmore¹ sits writing to her husband with tears in her eyes and a smile on her lips, and his

¹ Lady Catherine Herbert, daughter of the tenth Earl of Pembroke, and wife of the sixth Earl of Dunmore. She was at this time Lady-in-Waiting. Lord Dunmore died in 1845.

picture on one side of her paper, and her children's on the other ; the picture of meek endurance, *en attendant* next Thursday, when she is to go back and Lady Mount Edgcumbe to come in her stead. . . .

CLAREMONT,
March 8, 1843.

. . . “*Boring Claremont!*” why—well—I can't quite say that of it. When one is just leaving a place you know, one feels tender about it. And I should be thankless if I felt nothing but hostility to poor Claremont, in spite of stiff dinners, ditch water, and cold bedrooms. But it has been so fine here, and the country grows springy—thrushes are singing and crocuses blowing—no garden was ever so beautiful as this I believe all the year round, so that I have had many a lump in my throat out walking, as ladies of fifty-six are apt to have at the feeling of spring, which makes ladies of twenty-one run and jump about. But I shall be very glad to be in my pretty London room, and quiet and regular. London is just opposite to me, from what it is to others, you know—very quiet and snug and clean and regular—and I can hardly believe I shall dine in long sleeves with dear old Caroline and Kitty to-night. . . .

She returned to Claremont very soon, for the next letter is written from there on the Queen's birthday.

[CLAREMONT,
May 24, 1843.]

. . . All is very auspicious here on this fête. We had a pouring morning, but all is now fair and fresh again. Princessy *surtout*, she looks the image of May Day, dressed in a very fine muslin frock, embroidered in wreaths of lilies of the valley and rosebuds, with an apron of bright green silk, embroidered to match, presents from the Duchess of Kent. The Prince is beautiful too in his sky-blue velvet. The Queen looks all over happiness. Her birthday presents (from Prince Albert) were arranged under a bower of magnificent flowers erected in her breakfast room. Never were there such flowers I do think as in this garden. . . . The chief present is a *beautiful*

sketch by Landseer of the Princess Tiny,¹ in a cradle lately given, which belonged to the old Saxon house. . . . The child lies most nestly and "comfy" in it asleep, watched over by Dandie, the black terrier, with an expression of fondness and watchfulness such as only Landseer can give. It was prepared in secret by Prince Albert,² who looks very *rayonnant* to-day, and made his appearance at eight o'clock in the morning in the nursery, in a handsome many coloured dressing gown, to fetch the children to "Mama." . . .

CLAREMONT,
May 28, 1843.

. . . The Archdeacon was very eloquent this morning, rather more *ambitiously* so, to use a very pedantic phrase, than usual; but it is fair enough with such an anti-village congregation, and his powers never can require anything but a rein; the metaphors and imagery are so abundant and so true, they never verge upon rhapsody, and he raises his hearers with him to any height. The subject was a blessed one—our Saviour's continual presence with us since the Ascension. The practical inferences were beautiful, and appeared deeply to affect himself. . . .

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
July 25, 1843.

. . . Fanny Paget³ looked really of more than human beauty last night, on Lord Ormonde's arm, with roses and long ringlets and a face rather more than usually excited. . . .

February 1, 1844.

I have been with the Queen a good deal altogether. She is very affecting in her grief for the poor old Duke [of Coburg], whom she scarcely knew. But it is, in truth, all on the Prince's account, and every

¹ Princess Alice (1843-1878). She married in 1862 the Grand Duke of Hesse.

² A present once given by Prince Albert to the Queen was a seal. Engraved on it was a pineapple, with the motto, "Sa gloire n'est pas sa couronne."

³ Daughter of Sir Edward and Lady Harriet Paget. She married the second Marquis of Ormonde in September, 1843.

time she looks at him her eyes fill afresh. He has suffered dreadfully, poor man, being very fond of his father. His floods of tears yesterday affected poor Mr. Anson into a violent attack of nervous headache, which has quite laid him up. The sweet little Princess has been wonderful in her feeling. She burst into tears yesterday on seeing the Queen crying ; and on coming home last evening, when I went to her she said : "Poor, dear Grandpapa is very ill ; it makes me unhappy, Laddle" (her very words). "Poor, dear Papa and dear Mama cry so ! But he will be quite well *in two weeks*. There is another Grandpapa in Mama's pretty room—hanging up ; but then he can't speak—he's only a picture." I had to spare her as if she was a woman, and did not tell her of the death till this morning. That, however, she only listened to in silence ; I suppose it gave her *no idea* at all. . . .

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
February, 1844.

. . . Poor Princess Alice just vaccinated from a *magnificent* baby. Such a duett of shrieks as the two kept up, staring and terrified at each other, and ascribing the cuts, no doubt, to each other, instead of Mr. Brown ! I sit now all day in the nursery, except when Princey is asleep and after he is in bed. He is a very nice child, and *treibt sein Wesen* gently and merrily about one. Princess Alice is beginning to show forwardness—clasps her fat hands so beautifully when asked to say "Up so high!" I believe it is just what I am fit for, tho' I don't *much* like it for long together, to take care of people of their age. *Extremes meet*. The Queen was so gracious as to write to me the moment she came back from the House of Lords yesterday. She was very nervous before it, and so happy when it was done, she was quite overflowing with spirits, poor little soul ! . . .

February 9, 1844.

. . . Her Majesty and the Prince are both very well. It was pretty to see him yesterday, after Mrs. Sly had vainly endeavoured to get on the Prince of Wales's glove (you know what a difficulty), and thrown it aside at last as too small, just coax the

child on to his own knee, and put it on, without a moment's delay, by his great dexterity and gentle manner; the Princey, quite evidently glad to be so helped, looking up very softly at his father's beautiful face. It was a picture of a nursery scene. I could not help saying: "It is not every Papa who would have the patience and kindness," and got such a flashing look of gratitude from the Queen! What a tiny event, to be sure, to write! . . .

. . . I set to last night and wrote myself to bed, so as to be ready for my begging letters this morning. One is to the Prince of Wales, from a Master Robson, written SO, by his Mama's desire, to ask to be educated free of expense, by the Prince of Wales's means, at Eton or Westminster, and in a touching *naiveté* ends: "I will promise to distinguish myself." I shall give it to Prince Albert. . . .

. . . Prince Albert is now quite well. Last I saw of him was half an hour ago. On the Queen fidgetting after some book, and saying, "Where *can* it be? Does it belong to me?"—"Everything belongs to you," was her husband's answer, with a most graceful bow of real chivalry. "No, no, no!" she replied, very red, and more than half really angry. How glad she would be to leave her throne for him, and "wash the feet of the servants of my Lord"! . . .

Henry,¹ is it wrong or unusual in a gentleman to take a *paid* curacy? George says yes; Billy no. . . .

February 16, 1844.

. . . The Prince of Wales talks much more English than he did, though he is not articulate like his sister, but rather babyish in accent. He understands a little French and says a few words, but is altogether backward in language, very intelligent, and generous and good-tempered, with a few passions and *stampings* occasionally; most exemplary in politeness and manner, bows and offers his hand beautifully, besides saluting *à la militaire*—all unbidden. He is very handsome, but still very small every way.

Princessy gets on very well. Her lessons are better

¹ Rev. Henry Glynne, younger brother of Lady Lyttelton and of Mrs. Gladstone. He married Lavinia Lyttelton in 1843.

than I had looked for, but much is still to be done before she can read. She is always good at her prayers, but much is still to be done there too. In short, much more is to be done than I can do, I am afraid, every way. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
Sunday, February 25, 1844.

. . . Just before Church time the Queen told me Archdeacon Wilberforce was to preach¹ . . . so I had my treat most unexpectedly—mercifully I could call it; for the sermon, expressed in his usual golden sweetness of language, was peculiarly practical and useful to myself—I mean, ought to be. “Hold thee *still* in the Lord, and abide patiently upon Him,” was the text; and the peace and trust and rest which breathed in every sentence ought to do something towards assuaging any and every worret, temporal and spiritual. There were some beautiful passages on looking forward into the “misty future” and its misery to a worldly view, and the contrary. The whole was rather the more striking from its seeming to come down so gently upon the emblems of earthly sorrow—such a “boundless contiguity of shade!” Chapel hung almost all over, pulpits, panels, seats, Bibles, with black cloth; and all the people, men and women (except liveried ones), covered with crape and black stuff. I wish you had heard a beautiful passage about growth in grace being greatest when the mind and heart are at rest and in stillness—like the first shoot of spring, which is not forwarded by the storm or the hurricane, but by the silent dews of early dawn. Another upon the melancholy of earthly life! Most beautiful!

I am sorry to say the Archdeacon has grown fat, which makes him almost painfully ill-looking. His eyes are spoilt by it, which used to be so deep and fine. I shall, of course, not see him this time, as society is suspended here. A few bows and curtsies between me and “the gentlemen” after morning prayers is all. . . .

Prince Albert went to Germany in March this year.

¹ At the funeral service for the late Duke of Coburg.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.**March 29, 1844.*

. . . You may be feeling for the Queen, who has been behaving like a pattern wife, as she is, about the Prince's tour—so feeling and so wretched, and yet so unselfish, encouraging him to go, and putting the best face upon it to the last moment ! I shall be thankful when the trial is over, please God. We all feel sadly wicked and unnatural in his absence, and I am actually counting the days *de mon côté*, as Her Majesty is, *du sien*. . . .

CHAPTER XIV

1844-1848

THE first letter in this chapter betrays the anxiety which was constantly in Lady Lyttelton's mind lest she was falling short of the adequate discharge of the heavy responsibilities which rested on her, though there are many unconscious indications in this chapter of the affectionate relations which existed between her and her Royal charges. The accounts of the State visits of the Emperor Nicholas and of King Louis Philippe, as well as the clever and vivid sketches of other distinguished men who frequented the Court, afford highly interesting sidelights on the history of the time.

After a debate extending over six sittings, Sir Robert Peel's Government was defeated on June 25, 1846, on the question of the Irish Coercion Bill, and Lord John Russell proceeded to form his first Ministry.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

April 6, 1844.

. . . I received yesterday a wonderfully wise and strong letter from dear George. It had a really marvellous effect upon me—as if I had been trailing on the ground and he just picked me up and tied me to an oaken post, for a while at least. . . . What I

mean about George's letter strengthening me is as to my place. I feel quite a fresh comfort in his view of it, and have repeatedly since caught myself quoting his words to myself, "*called to it*," with much pleasure. Woke really thinking about it, and in great spirits altogether.

. . . The Archdeacon preached yesterday, and for the first time I did not admire his sermon. It was declamatory, and evidently forced and not practical—on the Crucifixion. The subject seemed too much for him; hitherto he has been almost too much for his subject. But he was deeply in earnest and very brilliant too. . . .

The Queen's birthday was on May 24.

CLAREMONT,
May 24, 1844.

. . . Here we are very bowery and flowery—nothing but sweet smells, and book-muslin, and brilliant presents, and happy faces. It really is all very pleasant. . . . and poor little Princessy (I hope) made her proper birthday speech, having wished everybody "Many happy returns" yesterday to keep herself in practice. My little people were dressed in time, the clothes fitted, the Prince was satisfied, the Queen surprised and pleased into the bargain. Besides which great features of comfort, I had the inexpressible one of the windows not being open at dinner, and that although fires are the peculiar blessings of one's own rooms, the very stiff and gaunt and courtly yellow satin evening drawing-room was somehow very tolerable. The Prince has given the Queen a portrait of himself by Thorburn, most beautiful indeed! Quite his gravest, manliest look, and rather tanned, as he was on his return—in *armour*, which is rather absurd, but very becoming, and according to an old wish of the Queen's. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

WINDSOR CASTLE, June, 1844.

. . . Yes, we have got the Emperor of Russia¹—the actual Great Bear!—and the children take to him very

¹ Nicholas I. (1796-1855).

kindly ; even Princess Alice goes to him with her fat hands held out. He is fond of children, which explains it ; otherwise his Imperial countenance is to my mind most forbidding, though he is undeniably a strikingly handsome man—six feet two or three inches, and with a faultless figure, and small head and regular features, and looks forty, though he is fifty. But the expression, especially when he sits near Prince Albert, is too autocratic, and has an awkward character of very deep gravity, almost sadness, and a strange and almost constant want of smiles. He is said to be very happy in his family, but he must feel dreary on looking out of it, as he might if settled at the top of Mont Blanc, and all the civilized world miles below. The King of Saxony is a beautifully kind and gentlemanlike-looking monarch, quite a contrast to the Czar, whose suite, by the way, are one more hideous than the other—quite a display of national ugliness. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

June 3, 1844.

. . . It is well you asked about the dress for Chiswick.¹ Everybody says that you must be in decided mourning, as Prince Albert goes, tho' the Queen does not, and, in compliment to H.R.H., the Duke of Devonshire is anxious no colours may appear. A black gown and white crape bonnet (of course, the gown may be satin if you like), or a gray gown and much black trimming and mourning flowers. We menials are to be in our profoundest gloom.

I dined down yesterday, and it was very interesting. I am glad to dine again to-day. On arriving downstairs, just dressed, I found the corridor full of men, not one woman ; and close to the bridge was the Emperor, in a dazzling circle of full-dress uniforms. I was absolutely frightened, and fancied besides that I had no business there, so hesitated on the bridge. Then came a voice of distant thunder, meant to be gracious, “Comment donc ? Est-ce-que nous vous en imposons ?” (Could not say, “Non, Sire.”) “Allons”

¹ The Duke of Devonshire gave a garden party at his villa there in honour of the Emperor Nicholas.

—and he came and took hold of my hand and led me through. . I really have not been so terrified for many a year. Shyness is pretty in youth, but in my latitudes grows vulgar. Can't be helped.

When His Imperial Majesty left the white-and-gold ball-room, where we passed the evening, to go to bed, he stood one moment at the door to wish a general good-night. And I never shall forget his look! He has a power of looking one down beyond any other man, and he seemed to exert it fully just then towards us all, poor seventy mortals crowding the room. The only fault (sculpturally speaking) in his face is that he has pale eyelashes, and his enormous and very brilliant eyes have no shade. Besides which, they have the awful look given by occasional glimpses of white above the eyeball, which comes from his father Paul, I suppose, and gives a savage look to his face at moments.

"Very good-looking man—always was so—scarcely altered since I saw him—rather browner—no other change—very handsome man now. Don't you think so?" I had the happiness to have this speech made to me in a very loud, deep tone by the Duke of Wellington, as we sat at dinner just opposite the Emperor, who understands English. And I had to scream out my answer, "Yes, very handsome indeed!" No escape; he waited, wondering I did not speak out sooner. . . .

The following is an account of a conversation with the Czar Nicholas :

Emperor very much pleased with the royal children, especially with their footing with their parents, and the affection and care shown them.

S. L. agreed, and said how happy it was that the Queen and Prince had succeeded in keeping their domestic relations like those of a private family, and could feel real family comfort—"C'est là Sire, le vrai bonheur de la vie!"

Emperor: "Le vrai bonheur! Le *seul* bonheur! Du moins, pour nous autres."

S. L.: "Non, Sire, pas le seul!"

Emperor: "Ah, Madame! Nous n'en avons guères d'autres. C'est un dur métier que le mien!"

S. L., something not well remembered and boggled

out, about difficult duties being those which bring the brightest consciousness.

Emperor bowed and half assented, then said : " Mais pour remplir nos devoirs il faut des forces physiques peu communes. Et elles ne peuvent durer. Et dès qu'elles commencent à nous manquer, on s'aperçoit que nous sommes de trop!"

S. L. : " Ah, Sire ! C'est alors surtout, que vous éprouverez le bonheur de posséder une famille comme le votre !"

Emperor : " Vous avez raison. Vous dites bien. Oui, je suis heureux dans ma famille. Mon fils surtout—mon successeur—je suis parfaitement content de mon fils."¹

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
June 5, 1844.

. . . We have been to the grand review,² which was a case of R. was a review³—except that I was deeply interested in Princey, who sat on my lap in ecstasies till the firing, when he behaved most prettily. It was quite near. "I afraid! Soldiers go popping! No more! I cry!" with the most touching countenance and bursting heart; but he conquered himself completely, did not cry a drop, and grew quite calm before it ceased—a real bit of courage on principle. Princessy was another Wellington, wholly unmoved. The only incidents of any interest were the very feeling cheer on the old Duke of Wellington passing the Queen's carriage and the really beautiful salute of Prince Albert, who rode by at the head of his regiment, and of course lowered his sword in full military form to the Queen,

¹ Afterwards the Czar Alexander II.; he succeeded his father in 1855, and was assassinated in 1881.

² The review referred to in this letter was held in Windsor Great Park, and was said to have been the finest that had taken place in this country for many years.

³ This is an expression borrowed from a "little language" used by the Glynne family. Lord Lyttelton wrote a glossary of the language, which was privately printed under the title, "The Glynnese Glossary."

with such a look and smile as he did it ! I never saw so many pretty feelings expressed in a moment. The Emperor looked very ill (for him) in an ugly helmet ; but he certainly is *un homme superbe*. And his visit has had the usual good effect of making the Queen like him much better than she did, especially as he says Prince Albert's face "exprime tant de noblesse et de bonté réunies." A wily old Asiatic, speaking truth, however, certainly this time. . . .

The next letter was written in reference to the christening of the Dowager Lady Lyttelton's grandson, Albert Victor Lyttelton, for whom the Queen stood sponsor.

July 14, 1844.

. . . I perfectly remember all the mummery at royalty-honoured christenings in my day. My dear sister was just so done by. A great, fat, oldish baby she was ; and my mother had to lie up after weeks of active health, in white satin and lace wrappers, and making believe she could not get up to receive the lord and lady who came proxies for King George III. and Queen Charlotte in the Spencer House ball-room. I was seven years old.¹ My Grandmother Spencer appeared in full dress, which in her case consisted of a complete suit of plain brown silk, worn over a huge hoop. In short, it was all contrived to be as little like a common baptism as possible. . . .

July, 1844.—. . . We are all on the look-out for signs of *illness* in the Queen ; but this morning she was tripping upstairs to chapel, and the vein of iron that runs thro' her most extraordinary character enables her to bear up to the last minute, like nobody else. . . .

Prince Alfred, afterwards Duke of Edinburgh, and of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, was born on August 6, 1844, and died in 1900.

September, 1844.—. . . Prince of Wales at the grand *réunion* just after the christening in the corridor, after asking two or three people and getting no answer, went up to the Archbishop himself, and said, "What

¹ In 1794.

is that you have got upon your head?" The Archbishop stooped down close to him, and with great respect and gentleness answered, "It is called a wig." Made a great laugh. . . .

The State visit of Louis Philippe, King of the French, to Queen Victoria was regarded as an event of great interest and importance. He was the first French monarch to land in the British Isles on a visit of peace and amity. The King left France on October 5 and returned on October 12. The chief ceremony during the visit was the investiture of the King with the Garter and the George at Windsor Castle.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

WINDSOR CASTLE, October 8, 1844.

As this is a historical day, I think I will not be lazy, but just write you word of our event while it is fresh, At two o'clock he arrived, this curious King—worth seeing, if ever a body was! The Queen having graciously permitted me to be present, I joined the party in the corridor, and we waited an hour. Then the Queen of England came out of her room to go and receive the King of France—the first time in history! Her Majesty had not long to wait (in the Armoury, as she received him in the State apartments, his own private rooms; very civil). From the Armoury, amidst all the old trophies, and knights' armour, and Nelson's bust, and Marlborough's flag, and Wellington's, we saw the first of the escort enter the quadrangle, and down flew the Queen, and we after her, just in time to see the escort clattering up, and the carriage close behind. The old man was much moved, I think, and his hand rather shook as he alighted, his hat quite off and his grey hair seen. His countenance is striking—much better than the portraits—and his embrace of the Queen was very parental and nice. Montpensier is a handsome youth, and the courtiers and ministers very well-looking, grave, gentlemanlike people. It was

a striking piece of real history—made one feel and think much. They have now eaten together right royally, and are in their own rooms. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.¹*

November 3, 1844.

. . . I wanted to have explained *why* I had discouraged a controversial correspondence with Mr. Gladstone, but I have missed it. I hope you understand it without explanation, and see that my objection is not suggested by any doubt of his great abilities and still greater virtues, but of his being a *practically judicious and clear-speaking and writing man* (a German sentence!), which all my veneration for him does not make me think him. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

WINDSOR,

January 14, 1845.

. . . I was *so* happy sitting by Mr. Gladstone one day and sometimes seeing him while he was here. All the ladies were quarrelling for who would have him as a neighbour, and I was much envied when it fell to my lot, by the Queen's kind order. He was most agreeable. . . .

Mr. Gladstone resigned in consequence of the Government proposing to increase the grant to the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth in Ireland, in order, he said, to form "not only an honest, but likewise an independent and an unsuspected judgment" on the matter. He subsequently supported the grant.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

February 6, 1845.

. . . Mr. Gladstone's resignation I am disappointed about. As far as I can understand his motive, it is

¹ The Dowager Lady Lyttelton's third and youngest son (1820-1884).

not disagreement on any point of principle with his colleagues, but such a fine-drawn punctilio as will hardly bear to be expressed in such coarse things as words, and I flatter myself that many people will find it as hard to understand as I do. In short, his intended course about it wants the *gros bon sens*, as usual. As to honesty, he is of course perfect on this as on all other occasions. . . .

February 11, 1845.

. . . My yesterday's down dining was very full of amusement and interest. The Palmers and Ashleys always prevent a dull minute.¹ We had no cards, but a deal of talk. Lady Ashley does not improve in my good graces. Her husband is the most extraordinary man, to be sure. He was appointed to hand me in to dinner; and we always are very intimate, but I did feel surprised before the first course was well over to find ourselves discussing the character of St. Paul as a common dinner topic! How in the world he gets on with his whole kin-in-law I don't guess. Indeed, his wife and he are as wide asunder as this world and the next. But he is very fond of her and she of him, and it is always pretty to see his awfully handsome face soften whenever his eye meets hers. When the Queen was gone to bed, and we began *good-nighting*, he came up to me and took me by both hands, saying, "Heaven bless you ten thousand times!" I was rather astonished, but pleased too. It felt warm and comfortable from a person so sincere, mad though he be. . . .

. . . Yesterday [Sunday] the Archdeacon² was very pleasant, but *he played at chess* with the Prince. Most clergymen would not do it nowadays; all did it in my time. And in point of fact it is of course harmless; but—but—I want something to set against the constant compliance and increasing charm, which continues quite irresistible; but it is hardly what I should like to look up to in my Princey's tutor; and yet much is to be said on the other side too, as, after all, it may only be the "beauty of holiness." We were talking of hypnotism before dinner. "Fixing the eyes," I said,

¹ Lady Emily Cowper, daughter of the fifth Earl Cowper.

² Wilberforce.

"on some uninteresting object with undivided attention will cause it."

"Pardon me; I can't quite believe that. For how often would the nervous sleep occur at church! During the sermon people are so apt to look at the preacher!"

Of course a general laugh; then someone answered, "But they do accordingly often sleep."

"Aye, but that is such a natural sleep. No hard name wanted for that." With the consciousness all the time that I suppose nobody ever went to sleep while he was pouring forth his magnificent periods. . . .

The public ferment to which the Oxford Movement had given rise was now at its height. The Rev. W. G. Ward (Ideal Ward) had just been deprived of his degree by the Convocation of the University of Oxford, for promulgating doctrines inconsistent with the Thirty-nine Articles, and in the following July another prominent Tractarian, the Rev. F. Oakley, was proceeded against and condemned on similar grounds.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, March 30, 1845.

MY DEAREST BILLY,—. . . I hope I can say with truth that the dreadful violence of polemical disputes has a little subsided, and some leaning on the part of the Bishops *against* the Oxford party seems to have done tardy good. So that I can't help hoping we may come out of the broil only the better, and not keep any but the good part of the changes that have been attempted. Our good old friend the Bishop of Ely's¹ death will not be a great loss to the Church, though he was truly honest and sincerely pious. His successor (Turton, Dean of Westminster) is, I believe, a very learned able man, and of course *no Tractarian*. None has the remotest chance of preferment now. . . .

¹ Bishop Allen. He had been Lord Althorp's tutor at Cambridge.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
April 23, 1845.

. . . Much love from the multitude who inhabit No. 39,¹ in the usual state of untidy, irregular, various, and, notwithstanding all, ever harmonious and merry ways of life, under the joint government of Mary and Caroline. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

July, 1845.

. . . We are all thinking and feeling much about the Dunmores. He is getting rapidly worse. The Queen is really almost ill herself with worry about it, and with wondering how Lady Dunmore can bear it, and sends incessant inquiries to Lady Emma's.²

July 18, 1845.

. . . Earl Grey is dead—the old statesman of ancient days, who stood like a Forum column. It feels like an event. His family, with their strong feelings, will be sadly wretched; and his widow, after fifty-four years' clinging to him, will be killed by it, if grief can kill. . . .

August or September, 1845.

. . . Don't be angry with Miss Gore.³ I can understand any girl being almost in love with Lord Howe, though he is ugly and child-ridden, and what you must think old. But he is so excellent a man, and has so delightful a manner—so exceedingly gentlemanlike and sensible—and a fine voice, too, that I give my consent. . . .

The Queen and Prince Albert paid a State visit to Coburg in the spring of 1845. Miss Pole-Carew had been there since, and had heard the Queen's

¹ The Lyttelton family lived then at 39, Grosvenor Place.

² Lady Emma Vesey, sister of Lady Dunmore.

³ Anna, daughter of Admiral Sir John Gore, married, in October, 1845, as his second wife, the first Earl Howe (1796-1870). She died in 1877.

manner criticized. Lady Lyttelton wrote to her niece on September 22, 1845 :

. . . I had a fit of courage last evening, and, on the Queen and Prince opening the subject of false reports as to their conduct and manner abroad, I told *all* you had said about *Verdriesslichkeit* [crossness], and missing not one hard word. I thought it fair the Queen should know for future use. Of course, she listened with an air of meek endurance, as usual, and said she feared she might have looked cross, from fatigue and shyness, before she reached Coburg ; but that it was dreadful to have it interpreted into ingratitude, when she was so deeply grateful and immensely delighted with everything. The Prince advised her (on her saying, like a good child, "What *am* I to do another time ?") to behave like an opera-dancer after a piroquette, and always shew all her teeth in a fixed smile. Of course, he accompanied the advice with an immense piroquette and prodigious grin of his own, such as few people could perform just after dinner without being sick, ending on one foot and t'other in the air. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne. (Fragment of a Letter written April, 1844.)

Princessy (spells) : " H-O-M-E-L-Y—homely. What does that mean, Laddle ?"

L. : " It means not pretty—not *very* ugly, but not pretty."

P. : " *Who* is homely ?"

L. : " I think Laddle is homely."

P. : " Oh, Laddle !" (very coaxy); " but then you are *kind*, and I think you have a *very* sweet voice."

So pretty it was !—gave me a lump in my throat, so graceful and affectionate was her little manner.

Princey said a nice thing just now. His father gave him a toy, and he took it to Mlle. Charrier, and said : " *Vous me l'ôterez quand je ne serai pas sage.*" The Princess, after an hour's various naughtiness, said she wished to speak to me. I expected her usual penitence, but she delivered herself as follows : " I am very sorry, Laddle, but I mean to be just as naughty

next time." This was followed by a long imprisonment. We shall see the effect. . . .

Lord Spencer died on October 1, 1845, after a short illness. He had during the last ten years of his life devoted himself to country pursuits, and only occasionally emerged from his retirement—as, for instance, when he publicly advocated the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1843, and supported the Maynooth College Bill in the House of Lords only three months before his death.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WISETON, October 3, 1845.

. . . My dearest brother died as he had lived, in earnest piety and simplicity, and with more than resignation. His was joy. His simple manliness of mind never left him. He read over his will with Fritz, talking over every point and explaining his wishes as if it had been another's. And when all was done, and he had conversed beautifully with him, his countenance took an expression of perfect peace, and with a smile on his lips he remained entirely placid, and death came like a gentle sleep upon him, like that of a child. He said that he deeply felt his had been "indeed a happy life," and that he was now most happy, but that this did not diminish the joy with which he obeyed the awful summons and accepted the call to heavenly peace. There is every proof of his deep faith and humility which can be given. And what a consolation! . . .

WISETON, October, 1845.

. . . The magnificent herd of beautiful cows look very sad. My brother gave directions (I believe in his will) about them, which is somehow affecting in its peculiarity. . . . Dear Lavinia's¹ letter is delightful. Her relation to my brother was almost the most

¹ Daughter of Lady Lyttelton's sister, Lady Georgiana Quin. She married the Hon. Richard Watson, of Rockingham Castle, Northants, fourth son of the second Baron Sondes, and died in 1888.

affectionate of all. He was particularly fond of her poor mother, and I think the feeling continued towards her. So that to her he was less reserved, and more openly fond and gentle, than to anyone else ; and we all know what depth of warm tenderness there was in him, only he shut it up from most. . . . I am glad always when such times of distress leave an increase of kind feelings towards anyone, and it has been so to me about two people at least. One I have always liked, but not so much as now—Mr. Watson I mean ; such feeling and tact, and such perfect *gentlemanlike*-*ness*, I never saw ! The other person I had amiably taken a sort of dislike to, from never having seen him, and having heard incessant praise of him—Lord Leicester;¹ and indeed I feel as if he must be a grandson of my own now, after seeing his behaviour on Thursday. Such a dear *child* as he was, in grief and tenderness, and judicious, too, in every way. . . .

December 7, [1845].

. . . I have just heard another of the vexing pieces of news so sadly common nowadays. Mr. Faber² has *con-*, or rather *perverted* Mr. Frederick Wells³ to Romanism. Poor Lady Charlotte Proby is very sorrowful about it. There is now an almost daily paragraph in the newspapers headed “Secessions from the Church.” It begins to frighten me as a really important falling off being near at hand. As long as the Bishops are all steady, I do trust we shall only lose the good-riddances. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

January 2, 1846.

. . . Did George *reopen* with scissors, very neatly, his letter of yesterday’s date, and reseal it *obviously* ?

¹ Thomas William, second Earl (1822-1909). Lord Leicester always said that Lord Spencer, who had been his guardian, was the best man he ever knew.

² Frederick William Faber (1814-1863), Rector of Elton, Hunts, was one of the most eminent of the Tractarian party, and the author of many theological works. He is now, however, mainly remembered as the writer of many well-known hymns.

³ Son of Lady Elizabeth Wells and nephew of Lady Charlotte Proby.

If he did not, *somebody* did ; and as it contains a very important and plainly expressed State secret, I should like to know (as Princess Alice said) *whobody* ! . . .

Lord Lyttelton was appointed Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

CLAREMONT,
March, 1846.

It feels odd to-day—to recollect that all is settled, and George is in office. My old bugbear for so many years actually come to pass ! My breakfast was not quite happy. I could not help looking at the other end of the table and watching Sir Robert Peel, at the top of that awful ladder, on whose lowest round is now dear George, with perhaps the power, and, if so, perhaps the duty, to go up. And his pale looks, and total abstraction of mind, when, after whispering a discreet congratulation behind my chair, he sat down and took a bit of roll in his hand, which was only turned about and hardly tasted, and the expression of his poor, ugly face as long as he sat there were sad subjects for my thoughts. He soon got up and went to the window, and seemed unable to *put on* anything like cheerfulness. It was the coming Session, the late “Ministerial crisis,” that were eating into him. Well, it makes no difference. It was as a duty that dear George took the charge upon him, and he will be helped through it, we must hope and trust.

We have had an excellent—not very eloquent, but most practical—sermon from the Bishop,¹ who is very agreeable and brilliant as usual—and, I fancy, *a little* graver, which I am glad of. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR,
June, 1846.

. . . Yesterday everybody was much amused with the dancing, which indeed was most comical. The minuet, alas ! broke down by the fault of the band ; they cannot learn the tune. Then came quadrilles and Sir Roger de Coverley ; and then the Queen issued

¹ Archdeacon Wilberforce was made Bishop of Oxford this year.

her commands that every soul should dance the country-dance who could dance at all ! The obedience was like the effect of a magical horn. Lady De la Warr, Lady Jersey, the Duchess of Kent, in years ; Lady Theresa Digby, seeming just out of a sick bed ; Matilda Paget, just going into one ; Lady Anna Maria Dawson, deaf and aged ; Lady Exeter, against all conscience and prudence ; Bessy, against many good reasons, too—were specimens of the ladies. The gentlemen comprised Colonel Drummond, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Aberdeen, who looked more of a scarecrow than ever, and quite as stiff as timber, and Sir Robert Peel, much the best figure of all, so mincing with his legs and feet, and his countenance full of the funniest attempt to look unconcerned and “matter-of-course,” while he was evidently, very naturally, both shy and cross. The *poussette* in which they went round with their fair partners, the Countesses of Jersey and De la Warr, was too excellent as fun. I kept to my resolution to give any degree of offence rather than stand up myself. I quite affronted Fritz, who had declined dancing at first, and then repented and wanted me. Both *ces demoiselles* being gone to the races to-day, I want my legs for hard work, and I am glad I saved them last night. . . .

OSBORNE,
June, 1846.

. . . I had a little conversation on the road to church with Prince Albert, and it was pleasant to see how earnestly he tries to do his best about this place, giving work to as many labourers as possible, but not making any haste, so as to make it last, and keep at a steady useful pitch, “not to over excite the market.” His bailiff (I mean of course the Queen’s) has dismissed quantities of men lately, because it is harvest time, that they may work for others, telling them all that the moment any man is out of employment he is to come back here, and he will without fail find him work to do. This is doing good very wisely.

My favourite Queen Louise is as nice as ever. Madame Vilain XIV. has many pretty anecdotes of her, and so borne out by daily and hourly acts of kindness and modesty and peaceful dignity ! There never was such a manner, I do think. Mme. V. told me of an

exertion she made once to attend Mass in the middle of a voyage home from England, getting up at five to go post-haste to a poor chapel at Woolwich, and back to breakfast, not to disturb the King's arrangements. "Toujours d'une exactitude si rigoureuse quand il s'agit d'un devoir, et puis pour tout le reste *si large*, si indulgent!"

Lady Desart and I performed our Cowes expedition yesterday very happily.... It was charming all the time—such a lovely fresh day.... Lady Desart looked so extremely pretty she was stared at, most respectfully but earnestly, by every man, gentle and simple, we met....

Sir Robert Peel's Government was defeated on the Irish Coercion Bill by a coalition of Whigs and Protectionists, by a majority of seventy-three. Lord John Russell succeeded Sir Robert in the Premiership.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

OSBORNE,
June 26, 1846.

... The bouncing majority against Peel in the House of Commons (I say *Peel*, as he is historical, as I should say *Nelson*—begging the latter's pardon for the *rapprochement*) seems to make it clear *to-day* must announce his resignation. The Queen looks rather *préoccupée*, but says not a syllable. . . .

OSBORNE,
June 29, 1846.

Just come up from the beach, where we saw the historical event of Sir Robert Peel's departure—*after* his resignation I conclude; for no sooner was he off on board the *Fairy* than the Queen arrived with the Prince, and Her Majesty looked as if *something* had happened. Oh! for a woman to have such things to manage and to stand!

Just now the Princess Royal read in "Little Arthur's History of England" the name of an ancient poet called Wace. I said, "Well, Princess, that is something new to Laddle. I never knew of that old poet till now."

"Oh yes, I dare say you did, only you have forgotten it. *Réfléchissez!* Go back to your *youngness* and you will soon remember." I certainly never remember in all my *youngness* such a young lady as she is at her age! . . .

OSBORNE,

June 30, 1846.

. . . We are in hourly expectation of poor, poor Lord John Russell, whose entrance into office seems somehow not canny. Last time it was (they said) made impossible by his wretchedness about his wife, and this time he has probably heard yesterday or to-day of his brother's¹ death! Come in, however, he *must*, somehow; but it is a bad minute, and when I recollect all the people of doubtful character he has to bring in (Lord Palmerston, Lord Normanby, etc.), I dread it altogether. . . .

OSBORNE,

August 16, 1846.

Mr. Anson told me a night or two ago that he (Fritz) was most incomparable in his place.² He said he had shown remarkable activity, and had already done lasting good. I fully believe it; he took his place in the light of the command of a ship, and set to work in earnest with old habits of discipline and order. Princess Royal playing in the room all this time—think of her escape! She trod on a large nail just now. Happily it did not quite pierce even her satin shoe, but remained sticking in it till I picked it out. It gave me a *turn*, and I said seriously, "You might have been much hurt, Princess, but it pleased God to save you the great pain." "Shall we not kneel down?" she said so prettily, poor child. Of course we did, and I prompted a few plain words. She is certainly remarkable for piety—very separate from many other virtues, unluckily! I hope they may come in the train of the first some day. . . . Last night we played at Blind Hookey, a horrid gambling game, for pence. And the Duchess of Kent quite innocently asked: "Blind Hookey? What is dat name?" "I don't know," said

¹ Major-General Lord George William Russell, G.C.B.

² Frederick, Earl Spencer, was Lord Chamberlain from 1846 to 1848.

the Prince, "only he is Hookey, and he is blind." So we laughed, it was said so gravely, and quite puzzled the Duchess. . . .

The Royal Family went away for a few days on a yachting cruise this summer.

OSBORNE,
August 18, 1846.

. . . Well, here we are, left, very early, so I am just *head-to-head* with Colonel Bowles!¹ I wonder which of us dislikes it most! I must be desperate about coming up to my room early in the evening. The Princess Royal was most tender and touching in her regrets at leaving me; quite like few grown-up friends; and if at the last minute she had not quarrelled with her bonnet and tried to bite my hand in her rage, I should take it all for steady affection. Princess Alice burst into tears very prettily as the carriage drove off. Yesterday walking home I was seized with an admiration for the weather and the scene, which made my lonely walk pleasanter than is usual. Patches of children, each attended by their scarlet footman, shining in the distance—Mr. Anson escorting Lady Jocelyn across the park with her two babies. The Prince very busy with the builders.² The equerries charging about—all looked rather interesting and royal. . . .

OSBORNE,
August 26, 1846.

. . . I have been out on a pleasant stroll about the brick and mortar heaps, and then into the flower garden, and there I saw the children burst out of the house after tea in great joy; Princey quite at home in his sailor's dress—"Je suis un petit mousse." It seems to please all the people who see it—John Bulls and Jack Tars. It was a good notion of Her Majesty. Princessy wrote a large text congratulation to her father,³ and her condescending manner of telling me how it was received was too good. "Papa read my letter to himself all through, and then he shewed it

¹ Equerry-in-Waiting.

² Osborne House was being built.

³ On his birthday, August 26.

to everybody in the room. He seemed quite proud of it," with a slow smile and head on one side. . . .

Sir James Graham is gone. He made us a great break and refreshment to the brains, being a Minister, and therefore, according to my general rule, very agreeable at Court. . . .

OSBORNE HOUSE,
August, 1846.

The Queen Dowager and Princess of Prussia came to luncheon, always the cause of lame legs and worn-out spirits to all officials past thirty. The Princess of Prussia¹ is wife to the King's nephew, and heir presumptive. She is said to be extremely agreeable and sensible, very civil and good-humoured. My dear Queen Dowager seems well; very nice as always. Bishop of Oxford *s'est surpassé* last evening in agreeableness—most brilliant conversation—contrived to interest the Queen in astronomical subjects; seems very well informed on them and natural history. Oh! that he were but perfect and would take Princey away and bring him up. But alas! neither is possible nor likely. Often indeed is my heavy burden increased to a crushing weight when I think of that child. . . .

September 3, 1846.

. . . A very long most delightful visit from Lady Clanwilliam and Emma.² They were full of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert's³ welcome at Wilton, with flowers, and arches, and huzzahs innumerable from tenants, etc. And then the same welcome was prepared for dear Lady Pembroke; but she, not expecting it, timed her arrival after darkness, and in *pitch* darkness was received by an immense procession and an address; to which *she* had to make a *speech* in answer! Lady Clanwilliam said she did it gracefully, gratefully, and modestly, as she was sure to do; but a regular *speech*! Listened to in dead silence, and followed by immense

¹ Empress Augusta, wife of Emperor William I.

² Lady Emma Herbert, daughter of the eleventh Lord Pembroke. She married in 1839 Thomas, third Viscount de Vesci.

³ Hon. Sidney Herbert, afterwards Lord Herbert of Lea and Secretary at War. He married in August, 1846, Elizabeth, daughter of Lieutenant-General A'Court Repington, who died 1911.

cheering. The whole thing made both her and Lady Bruce¹ laugh till they could hardly stop ; it was so very droll, though affecting too. . . .

The Royal Family went on a yachting cruise to Cornwall and the Channel Islands, in September.

September 7, 1846.

. . . I have heard at last from the yacht. The Queen gives a good account of everything. Her Majesty says : "Your brother does everything *so well!* Vicky calls him 'a dear little man.'" Fritz seems to have found his *bestimmte Stelle*. He has, I know, great adroitness and tact, and his serious, quiet, and rather reserved manner is the best and safest at Court. It is a pity he must turn out with the Whigs perhaps soon. Our evenings are sad indeed, and I am disappointed that Colonel Bowles does not come back till Wednesday. I have never experienced anything the least like it. Sometimes I could almost titter at the up-hillness and the poor attempts at talking, on whatever subject ; not one seems to interest the Colonel² *at all*. Reading is my only resource, and that is rather difficult under the circumstances. I wish I had some work ; another time, if I live to stand another, I will take to the threaded steel. I cannot . . . look forward to a holiday for a great while. The children get so petted and neglected and irregular and idle in these cruises, in spite of much trouble taken by the Queen, that it takes long to recover and I should do wrong to leave them when once we get back to orderly ways at Windsor. . . .

September 9, 1846.

. . . The royal return is well over ; everything is in its place again. The Prince of Wales looks bigger and browner and less shy ; don't stammer at all ; has captured many people by being frank and civil. The fuss made about him in Cornwall was immense. They called him Duke of Cornwall, and never Prince of Wales, and sent him presents and cheered finely. Prince Alfred said on first seeing Princess Helena

¹ Mary Caroline, daughter of the eleventh Earl of Pembroke, married Earl Bruce, afterwards Marquis of Ailesbury

² Colonel Bowles, another Equerry.

yesterday morning quite of his own accord : " Bless her pretty eyes !" Then he refuses a proposal indignantly when it is not agreeable by saying, " Boys never !" with great emphasis. He is not a great talker. . . .

September, 1846.

. . . I was glad when Colonel B. came back, but was soon cured, and longed for King Log again ! Colonel Bowles yawns and swears and tells regimental stories several times over again, and is much worse *en tiers* than *tête-à-tête*. Last evening a household dinner. Colonel Grey and Lady Canning. Such an influx of brains and brilliancy. I never spent a more *intellectual* and pleasant evening. Their account of the loyalty and picturesque reception at Jersey was quite touching. A crowd of young ladies in white, strewing flowers, and thousands of people joining them and singing "God save the Queen." The Castle of Mont Orgeuil, professing never to have been taken ; but Colonel Grey was too many for them there, and knows it has surrendered five times, once to Bertrand du Guesclin. He knows everything just like a wizard, and I continue to think him exceedingly softened and improved, tho' I am still afraid of his biting off my head. . . .

On September 15 the Royal Family moved into the new house.

OSBORNE HOUSE,

September 16, 1846.

Our first night in this new house is well past. Nobody caught cold or smelt paint, and it was a most amusing event the coming here. Everything in the house is quite new, and the dining-room looked very handsome. The windows, lighted by the brilliant lamps in the room, must have been seen far out at sea. After dinner we rose to drink the Queen's and Prince's health as a *house-warming*, and after it the Prince said very naturally and simply, but seriously, " We have a hymn " (he called it a psalm) in Germany for such occasions. It begins"—and then he quoted two lines in German which I could not quote right, meaning a prayer to " bless our going out and coming in." It was dry and quaint, being Luther's ; but we all per-

ceived that he was feeling it. And truly entering a new house, a new palace, is a solemn thing to do. . . .

OSBORNE,
September 17, 1846.

. . . A most toilsome afternoon, ending by a high honor to rest my weary head and legs. Prince Albert insisted on my planting a tree in the garden—a cedar (*Cedrus deodara*, from Himalaya)—and so I held it, while he, with a spade and the gardeners besides, most manfully threw up the bank of earth around it. So it will be called after me.¹ . . .

OSBORNE,
December 11, 1846.

. . . How true is your word about Lady Pembroke's manner bringing one close to her! That arises from one of her good qualities—*truth*—extending to the absence of all affectation to a singular extent. Then it's a charming mind to be close to—that's another thing to admire.

. . . Mr. Cubitt [the builder] called here yesterday, and by the kind orders of the Prince is taking great pains to calm and warm my room. He made us laugh on talking over his visit by our recollecting that in a profusion of promises of making every exertion to cure the evil, he said: “I will not neglect any hint of your ladyship's. I will go the length of *believing every word you say about it*.” Most civilly and humbly meant by the poor man. . . .

WINDSOR,
June 1, 1847.

. . . Just to say a word of good-morning. No news. I am very well; so is everybody; also very hot; also very royal. The descent of the Duchesses to prayers sounded like a hailstorm. However, not to exaggerate, the whole noise was made by two Duchesses—indeed, chiefly by one, Sutherland, who had a vast deal of buckram and stiffening indeed; and having come too late, told me she had to run along the corridor with Lord Fortescue—rather a good sight. The old Duke and Duchess of Bedford² are grown to look quite

¹ Lady Canning planted one at the same time.

² They were married in 1808.

affecting—such a long, blameless, loving, married life. They look very old. . . .

June 5, 1847.

. . . The Prince of Wales went last evening to see the Eton boys' regatta and Surley Hall doings, with the Queen, etc. The enthusiasm was boundless among the young gentlemen, his future aristocratic subjects, and Dr. Hawtrey is delighted. . . . Prince of Wales asked the Queen in the railroad carriage, "Pray, Mama, is not a pink the female of a carnation?" Poor darling! I am sorry he said it, for he got such shouts of laughter for all answer that he was quite abashed. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

FORTHAMPTON,
July 15, 1847.

. . . Caroline, Kitty, and I railed down here yesterday evening, setting out late because I wanted to see the Queen fairly off from Osborne first. And we had many adventures, being all but too late, all but parted for ever from Macdonald and our luggage, and all but stunned by the noises, the worse than usual screechings, and tooth-on-edge yellings and squeaks of the odious train. I am besides grown rather frightened by the many collisions, and wish myself back in the blissful ignorance of earlier days when I reposed in peace on the brink of all the horrors one is exposed to on board a compartment. Thank God, all went off well, and here we are revelling in sweet smells and fresh clean air and stillness, and I can't say how much I enjoy it. The Yorkes are, as usual, totally unchanged, and their boy¹ tall and magnificent and promising as ever.

It is very pleasant to hear all they say of Althorp.² He must be a very nice boy, so gentlemanlike and good and popular—not clever, but not silly or idle. If you think I write worse than common, I answer in

¹ Miss Frances Pole-Carew, Lady Lyttelton's niece, married Joseph Yorke, Esq., of Forthampton, Gloucestershire. Their only son was John Reginald Yorke, late M.P. for Gloucestershire. He died in 1912.

² John Poyntz, fifth Earl Spencer, K.G., then aged twelve. He died in 1910, after a distinguished public career.



THE REV. THE HON. GEORGE SPENCER (FATHER IGNATIUS OF ST. PAUL)

To face p. 366.

Prince Alfred's words. He turned to me calmly and slowly in the middle of his dinner yesterday, and said, "I am *too* hot, I am." . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

OSBORNE,
July 26, 1847.

. . . To-day Lablache¹ is come for a lesson with his son, whom I saw last at the Opera, and I have just been to luncheon with them. Lablache speaking Italian beautifully to Dr. Meyer, and then talking in the purest, most languid and lazy Neapolitan to his son—really putting me at Naples—and all with his own magnificent voice. It was rather a pleasant break. . . .

The following letter referred to her brother George's (Father Ignatius) recovery from a dangerous illness. The famine in Ireland caused large numbers of poor Irish to escape to England. Fever broke out among them, and it was in ministering to these people at Aston, near Birmingham, that Father Ignatius caught the disease which brought him to the verge of the grave.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

July 25 (1847).

. . . Nothing ever surpassed the kindness of the Queen's manner and conduct. She arranged everything so that I should receive the good news even before she herself came up the hill; wrote me a most feeling letter in all the hurry of her departure from London, and really quite affected me with the *reality* of her sympathy. Dear Lady Mount Edgcumbe, too, quite gave me a lump in my throat by three words only she said to me at meeting, with such a dear, childlike kindness!

I began "Grantley Manor"² last evening. It is *very*

¹ The famous opera singer

² By Lady Georgiana Fullerton, daughter of Lady Granville.

clever and interesting. As to its papistry, it is curious (as far as I have got) how all the good results she attributes to it are simply the results of *Christianity*, whether Romanist or Anglican, and I dare say she unconsciously is herself deeply imbued with the finest and purest Protestant principles and feelings from her education, which makes her religion no fair test of Romanism. . . .

OSBORNE,
July 29, 1847.

DEAREST CHILD,—Thank you (it is now so much exploded to say so, that Lord Granville says "Very well, thanks") for last evening's letter.

. . . Miss Macdonald has received a letter from Lady Mount Edgcumbe, saying Lord Valletort¹ has rheumatic fever. They are so much relieved by its not being gout that this is by way of being good news. Miss Macdonald says there never was a more promising boy, or greater comfort to his parents, than this sick youth.

I never saw the Queen in such good spirits or happy looks.

I have just been called out to the staircase by the Prince to watch what is interesting him most deeply, and everybody a little—Mr. Dyce² at his fresco picture. It is a curious process, and so intricate I wonder it was invented so long ago. When H.R.H. had left me with the painter (who is one of the least agreeable, and most dry and half-sneering mannered men I have ever met), he surprised me by saying, "Pray, do you know the result of the Oxford election yet?" I answered "No," and then asked him if he was much interested for either candidate. "Yes—for Mr. Gladstone; he is my personal friend." I should as soon have expected to find a friend in a file, but I felt a sort of fellowship with the file directly. . . .

. . . The Princess begins to try one's depth, and talk blue. "Poor Roger Bacon! so hard upon him to have been thought wicked because he was so clever

¹ The present Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

² William Dyce, R.A. (1806-1864), the well-known painter. He executed the frescoes in the robing-room of the House of Lords, the work by which he is best remembered.

as to invent gunpowder!" and then, on talking of the Caledonian Canal, I asked her if she understood "Caledonian"? "Oh yes; Caledonia meant formerly Scotland, so it is only a more *elegant* way of saying *Scotch*." Miss Hildyard¹ is all eagerness, collecting books and brushing up her knowledge, to make them observe and learn plenty on their tour. They know heaps of flowers, and are more and more fond of botany. Miss H. waited outside the bedroom door the other night to hear the end of a sobbing fit of Princessy's after some misconduct, and Princess Alice said, "Oh, Vicky! How can you be so naughty?" "I can't help it," was the piteous answer. "But, Vicky," said the Prince of Wales, "I am afraid Miss Hildyard is gone down to call Papa, and dear Papa will be so sorry! Pray stop!" Wasn't it pretty to hear the poor little things? The sobs soon stopped, and all three were sound asleep. . . .

August, 1847.

. . . A good French joke from Colonel Phipps, who heard it from Lord Normanby. You know (or rather do not) what horrid discoveries of political dishonesty and public cheating have been occupying the French Government lately; people quite high in station tried for almost stealing and corruption. So they stuck up a placard at Paris in these words, "A nettoyer—Deux Chambres et une Cour." . . .

August 4, 1847.

. . . I was much pleased by the nice account of Mrs. Gladstone. It would indeed be an excellent plan that she should be confined at Edinburgh—provided she avoids *Ætherial* Simpson.²

Miss Hildyard having suggested to the Princess Royal that Madame Rollande³ should, when she rides the old pony with the children, use a broken whip, which she (Miss H.) always uses, the Princess said in the sharpest, sly way, "Oh, no! that whip won't do

¹ The English governess to the elder children. This was their first visit to Scotland.

² The famous Edinburgh surgeon, Sir James Simpson (1811-1870), who was the first to use chloroform and ether as anaesthetics. He was looked upon with horror at first by those who thought pain was a decree of Providence, which should not be averted.

³ The French governess.

at all for her. She is much too grand to use what *you* use. You are only Miss Hildyard; *she* is Madame Rollande de la Sange!" just as fully entering into the finery as she will do at twenty, and formidably satirical her turn is—no ridicule or foible escapes her. Luckily Miss H. is on her guard, with plenty of cold water for such jokes. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

OSBORNE HOUSE, September 28, 1847.

. . . All goes pretty well. I find myself on my proper level, fully absorbed in trying to keep the tableau right. Prosperity consisting in uninterrupted lessons—adversity in Mme. Rollande being unpunctual, Mlle. Grüner¹ ill, Miss Hildyard oppressed, or the children being called away on *treats*. Yesterday I hunted all over the house for both *ces dames* till I was half dead, and could not think where they were (lesson-time being fully passed), till I found them both, dressed up in patterns of silk and ribbons, in the Queen's wardrobe, where a haberdasher had just brought half his shop. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline
Lyttelton.*

OSBORNE HOUSE, October 4, 1847.

. . . Here is the grand *jour d'emballage*. Our nursery packing troubles are rather thrown into shade by Miss Skerrett's,² who has just made a most humorous complaint. "It would be all very well, ma'am, if it was not for the number and length of the stag's horns to be carried away." They must certainly puzzle a cap-case!

Said Dr. Meyer to Miss C. on a wintry day at dinner: "I went out to-day—I see the snow—and I think, there! I see something more white than the skin of the English ladies." Poor Miss C., of whom it is clearly true that her skin is *not* so white as the snow, was amused, and foolish enough to tell the Queen, who was, however, not pleased, looked grave and calm, and answered, "He has a very poetical turn!" . . .

¹ The German governess.

² The Queen's wardrobe woman.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 13, 1847.

. . . I suppose you will see something in the newspapers of the great escape for which *we all*, beginning at the top of the tree, have to thank God. The day before yesterday it was that the elder children being just setting out on their pony ride, the odious little Japanese pony Dwarf frightened the others, and all set out, being most unluckily, but by no fault of anyone, at the actual moment not held by bridles. The Princess Royal was quietly thrown after a few yards of canter, and not hurt. The Prince of Wales was run away with at the fleetest gallop his pony could go at, all round the lawns. He was strapped into his Spanish saddle. But, had the pony gone against a tree, or under a bough, or down the slopes, or had the dear child not been so brave as to keep hold of as tight a rein as he could pull, and neither to cry out nor move, we should now be thinking of him in happiness such as I trust in mercy he may live to inherit some more distant day. He did not cry, and showed no signs of fear, after one loud cry for help at first. Princess Royal was like herself, not frightened, and said nothing on falling off herself, but looking round and seeing her brother, screamed out, "Oh! can't they stop him? Dear Bertie!" and burst into tears. Oh! it was an awful thing! Now, I must beg of you to say as little as possible about it. The Queen undergoes such torments on every such occasion, from all her relations writing to criticize and inquire, and many anonymous "faithful subjects" thinking it right to do the same (as far as criticizing goes), that it has been kept as quiet as possible. After all, *nothing* happened; it is only the thought of what might have been the end. The children have been riding just as fearlessly as ever yesterday. Princey's pony is called Arthur, and is often thought slow. Yesterday, on the Prince taking his writing lesson, Miss Hildyard said, "Hold your thumb in the right place, Prince of Wales—so; you *can* do it right if you try, I'm sure." "Oh yes," he answered with a sly smile at her, "I *can*—Arthur *can* gallop, we know now!" It was the only allusion he made to it: rather a clever one. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

WINDSOR, October, 1847.

The children are well, and getting on satisfactorily on the whole. The Princess Royal, I firmly believe, might pass (if not seen but only overheard) for a young lady of seventeen in whichever of her three languages she chose to entertain the company. The Prince of Wales continues most promising for kindness and nobleness of mind. His sister has been lately often in disgrace, and though she is not "Alee" (Princess Alice, his greatest favourite), his little attentions on the sad occasions have been very nice. Never losing sight of her through a longish imprisonment in her own room, and stealing to the door to give a kind message or tell a morsel of pleasant news, his own toys quite neglected, and his lovely face quite pale till the disgrace was over. And such truth! He inherits all his mother's.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Lady
Pembroke.*

Early, 1848.

. . . What a beautiful account is yours of Lady Bruce! She is one of the people who puzzle one's theology more than Dr. Hampden could. Where are *her* sins? How does she fail in any of her duties? She must be of a different nature from any of us. So beautiful an image of kindness, courage, unselfishness, purity! It does one good to think about her. . . . You are indeed a happy mother, dear Lady Pembroke, and whoever deserved it better? . . . Farewell, my dear Lady Pembroke. I rejoice you were not *etherial*,¹ and did so well without it.

In another letter about this date Lady Lyttelton writes: "The poor Gladstones! What a journey! I suppose Simpson is very skilful with ether, but I would not consult him, for fear of his using it, if it could be helped."

¹ Lady Pembroke had undergone a slight operation

CHAPTER XV

1848-1850

THE year 1848 was a time of serious unrest among the peoples, and of anxiety to the Governments, of Europe. The story of the escape of Louis Philippe and his family from France, and of their taking refuge in England, is fully and graphically told in "The Letters of Queen Victoria," and need not be repeated here. In the opening pages of this chapter we find an independent account of the stir which these events caused at Court.

The remainder of the letters is mainly taken up by the daily life of the Royal Family, interspersed with many shrewd comments on men and books.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Lady Pembroke.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, February 28, 1848.

. . . Well, here we are in this mournful house, all in confusion, receiving the wretched refugees. They are all without clothes or money, and nobody knows what has become of those left behind. The Queen well, but sadly agitated, and the poor dear Prince quite cast down with [grief ?]. Think of the Duchess of Nemours!¹ Lost! Missing! in the Parisian mob! They were all absolutely dragged out of their car-

¹ Princess Victoria of Coburg, wife of the Duke of Nemours. He escaped first, and reached England safely.

riages, and the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg (the Princesse Clementine) arrived in London in real rags, her *only* clothes torn half off, and she very nearly crushed to death in the mob. We shall, everybody says, acknowledge the Republic, and have no war. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, March 1, 1848.

. . . Yesterday Miss Skerrett told me that a Princess and two children had been heard of at some French port, and it was hoped it might be the poor Duchess of Nemours. I must say I should feel in her place—I should feel my happiness as to earthly matters gone—having been so forsaken by him who ought to have protected her. The Duke has not been received *here*, but is at the French Embassy, where I suppose Louis Philippe will also be at first.

I am so stupid as not even to have tried to see all the little royal refugees downstairs. I hear that they are particularly naughty, riotous, disobedient, and unmanageable. After a scene of kicking and roaring, on Mrs. Moon endeavouring to measure them (the Queen has to dress them all entirely, they having neither clothes nor money—not a farthing in the English funds or anywhere), the nurse said to Miss Skerrett : “N'est-ce-pas, Madame, que ce palais est remarquable pour la quantité de cabinets qu'il contient, pour enfermer les méchants enfants?” “Oh, sans doute!” said Miss Skerrett. Monseigneur, however, remarked very wisely : “Mais ces cabinets, je ne les vois pas!”

Well, I was interrupted by a command to go to the Queen. She gave me, with her usual accuracy, some details. I have written them down, and hope that I have put only what is true; but Her Majesty spoke quickly, and I have some difficulty in recollecting. Then by her desire I went down to see the royal young things.

They were at dinner—three Coburg Cohary, and one Nemours; the latter Princess Marguerite,¹ already like her lovely mother. All very high-born looking, but puny and *very* small. No wonder! The night

¹ Princess Marguerite married Prince Czartoryski in 1872.

they arrived they all ate an immense supper of white soup, beef, chickens, and loads of raspberry jam tarts, and then were *immediately* put to bed without any washing! Their nurses had not a change of clothes of any kind. Nothing like a nightcap. . . .

Paper enclosed in the Preceding Letter.

On Thursday morning, and quite unexpectedly, notice was brought to the royal family at the Tuilleries that the mob was much excited and danger seemed to exist. The King was advised by some, and earnestly dissuaded by others, to abdicate. People were running in and out of the room; all was confusion. He signed the abdication, and soon after they were told they must fly for their lives—not a minute to spare. The King turned to the Duchess of Orleans, and told her she must stay with her boys there. She knelt and entreated to be allowed to share his fate and go with him, but he repeated his injunction, and she alone of all the women stayed behind in the palace, quite calm. The Duc de Nemours stayed with her. She was advised (they now think ill-advised) to go to the Chambers, where, when the mob burst in, they aimed at her with arms, tore her children from her, the poor little boys shrieking. She recovered the eldest, but the Duc de Chartres was taken away from her sight, and for some time she did not know what had become of him. Since, she was told he is safe; but he is still kept from her.

Meantime the King and the rest walked from the palace to some place where the carriages were waiting, and all got in, except Princesse Clementine (Duchess of Saxe-Coburg), and her husband and children, who got separated, and had to *walk* their way out of the town, clambering over the barricades, surrounded by the National Guard, who protected them from *such* a mob close round them! The Duchess says she has not been able to sleep since—the faces, scarcely human, seem still all round her. They got, however, safe all to Versailles. But there they were pursued, and the King said they must separate, for safety, and ten people got into one carriage, and travelled four days and nights without stopping till they got here.

They don't know anything of the King and Queen, but hope they are at Eu. The Duchesse de Montpensier¹ escaped before any of them with an old aide-de-camp. The people of the towns where she stopped—at least one man at Abbeville did it—refused to give her rest or shelter in his house or to lend her his cabriolet : “Cela me compromettrait.” She is a *very* young lady (sixteen !), and just going to be confined. The Duc de Nemours, after finishing with the Duchess of Orleans (I don't know where she is or how they parted), made the best of his way here, thinking his wife was with all her family, and not having any fear for her safety till he got quite away. She seems to have been separated from all the others ; how attended I don't know. Accounts are come that she is safe to-day. So far it is a better case for her husband than I had fancied. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, March 6, 1848.

. . . To-day is historical, Louis Philippe having come from Claremont to pay a private (a *very* private) visit to the Queen. She is really enviable now, to have in her power such a boundless piece of charity and beneficent hospitality. The reception by *the people* of England of all the fugitives has been beautifully kind. The account of the landing at Newhaven is quite touching.

The Princesse Clementine's maid, Mlle. Croisatier, went back to the Tuilleries, after the King and company had quitted it, to rescue her mistress's diamonds. She found them, broke the necklaces, etc., to pieces, and filled her pockets and all parts of her dress with

¹ Louis Philippe had given an undertaking at the Château d'Eu that no son of his should marry the Queen of Spain, or even her sister the Infanta, unless and until the Queen was married and had children.

In spite of this pledge, when the Queen of Spain was engaged to Don Francisco de Assisi, the Duc de Montpensier was also engaged to her sister Maria Louisa, whom he married in October, 1846.

This seriously weakened the friendly relations between England and France, though it did not lead to war.

the stones, and went down into the mob, through which she squeezed her way out of Paris—so squeezed that while men's backs were pushing her backwards, horses' knees were in her own shoulder-blades. She is a very little woman. Had she been at all examined, she would have been shot as a thief; but she bravely went on to St. Cloud, then to Trianon, seeking the royal family. Not finding them, and having £4 of her own about her, she worked her way to England, where she arrived in ignorance of their escape, found the Duchess, her lady, safe in this palace, and delivered her every diamond safe! She is a heroine, isn't she?—a *French* heroine, too; for she said to Miss Skerrett that while in the mob she perceived that all the Tuilleries contained had been pillaged and destroyed, therefore she felt she had lost all her own clothes. “*Et figurez vous ce que j'ai éprouvé en voyant mon chapeau vert, un chapeau tout neuf, un amour de chapeau, sur la tête d'une de ces vilaines femmes de la foule!*” *That* was her hardest trial. But, Croisatier for ever! She has more pluck than all the Princes of the Blood! . . .

About this time disturbances in various towns took place, in sympathy with the revolutionary movements on the Continent. A great demonstration was organized by the Chartist leaders in London, to be held on March 13 on Kennington Common, but owing to the ample precautions taken and the heavy rain it proved a fiasco. A great number of special constables from every class had been sworn in, amongst them Prince Louis Napoleon, the future Emperor of the French.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, March 10, 1848.

. . . Lucy Kerr amused me by a story, from Paris, of the Dowager Lady Sandwich,¹ who being there, and

¹ She was a daughter of the first Earl of Belmore, and married the sixth Earl of Sandwich in 1804. She died in 1862.

dreadfully frightened, adopted the precaution of sticking up on her entrance-door “La veuve d’ O’Connell !” to ensure popularity.

Fritz, Lord De Grey, the Duke of Norfolk, besides all the coal-heavers and tradesmen, have offered their services as special constables, and are put under regulation, to be called out if any more riots take place. None are expected. . . .

OSBORNE,
Sunday Evening, March, 1848.

. . . I have been to church, where a plain-spoken, loud-voiced clergyman read the very bad Liturgy prayer, “In Case of War and Tumults,” which scandalized my youth every Sunday, and was a painful reminder of old times. But he did not, as I feared, preach a political sermon. Prince of Wales sleeps in Miss Skerrett’s former room. His Royal Highness, on being taken there last night, exclaimed : “A capital room this !” which he will not say of such a one ten years hence, if he lives, and if he is a Prince, and if there are any Princes left in those days. . . .

Priscilla Lydia Sellon (1821-1876), alluded to below, was the foundress of Anglican Sisterhoods, and gave up her life and money to working among the poor. Other ladies joining her, she founded the Society of Sisters of Mercy at Devonport, and established schools and orphanages and model dwellings for poor tenants. Dr. Pusey took a warm interest in the scheme, which in itself was sufficient to evoke hostile criticism, and the papers made complaints against her. The Bishop of Exeter found it necessary to institute a public inquiry into her actions. He came to the conclusion she had acted with some imprudence, but on the whole he warmly espoused her cause. For several years the controversy continued, but she went on working till her death.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Countess
of Pembroke.*

HAWARDEN RECTORY, March 16, 1848.

. . . I am much interested in all you say about "Laneton Parsonage"¹ and the "Sellon Cause." On the former subject we quite entirely agree, and all but entirely on the latter. I think it absolute cruelty in a mother to withhold from her child all the benefit of her own experience, age, and knowledge of the world, as Mrs. Clifford does, with such shocking effects. The principle, as a general one, of great strictness in early childhood, and great indulgence in early *youth*, I think excellent. But the indulgence should not be neglect and non-interference, but such affection and such sympathy, such patience, as will make the mother the favourite friend and counsellor, and the most agreeable guide of the girl in all doubts and difficulties. There is a great difference in the two ways of going on, I am sure, and I can't help thinking you know something of it from your own experience. Your own footing with your dear children I always used to think perfect; and they are not like Ruth Clifford!

As to Miss Sellon, I *quite* feel with you on the folly and lamentable wrongheadedness of her blunders. The mischief she has done to the Church and to Christianity is awful, and only to be equalled by the mischief done to *her* by her defenders. The Bishop of Exeter² seemed trying to do harm by every word he uttered in her praise; one must forget all he said before one can feel justly. But I do not think vanity, or any faulty principle or feeling, actually prompted Miss Sellon; I believe it was mere want of judgement and want of control. I don't believe a woman can be trusted with full powers anywhere, especially a warm-hearted, enthusiastic woman. And Miss Sellon's worst fault was having acted too much without advice on such matters. But great as has been the mischief she has done, *her own self* one must venerate most deeply,

¹ "Laneton Parsonage" was by Miss Sewell, the authoress of "Amy Herbert," and other works.

² Henry Phillpotts, the well-known Bishop of Exeter (1778-1869), one of the most striking figures in the English Church at this time.

for her devoted and lasting devotedness to charity. Her sufferings are not owing to her goodness, but to her folly. Simple prudence would have saved all the evil. How odd it is, after all, that it seems impossible to look at a cross, or put a flower on a table, or give a new name to a prayer, without being instantly on the high road to worshipping the Virgin and believing in purgatory ! Where is the necessary connection ? One feels superstitious about it. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

OSBORNE HOUSE, April 10, 1848.

. . . Mrs. Disraeli said to the Queen the day before we left town that she *did* pity Louis Philippe and his family. "Such a sad thing those four young men *thrown out of employment*"—as if they had been stokers ! . . .

OSBORNE,
April 16, 1848.

. . . The Archbishop¹ did come yesterday, and is still here. He preached a very pleasing sermon in the dining-room morning service—shewing his long experience in composition by the most flowing, easy style, full of the gentle persuasion of his best published works—on the burning bush of Exodus. . . . The Archbishop is not nice-looking—a very narrow forehead, and nothing prepossessing—but I like to think of his character.

The Queen complains bitterly of having all the gay duties to do when she is so unhappy about Germany.² Her many German friends are in shocking difficulties. But the gay doings are a duty, and I daresay she will do them well. . . .

OSBORNE,
April 25, 1848.

. . . Dear Princess Alice is too pretty in her lace frock and pearl necklace, tripping about, blushing and

¹ Dr. John Bird Sumner (1780-1862), just appointed Archbishop of Canterbury.

² A serious riot had taken place in Berlin in March, with much loss of life. It was several months before the revolutionary movement subsided, in consequence of the grant of a constitution.

smiling at all her honours. The whole family, indeed, as Miss Hildyard was saying, appear to advantage on birthdays ; no tradesman or country squire can keep one with such hearty affection and enjoyment. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

OSBORNE, April 29, 1848.

. . . Our baby is right royal¹ ; very large, extremely fair, with white satin hair ; large, long blue eyes, and regular features ; a most perfect form from head to foot. The Queen is extremely proud of her. Hitherto she is as placid and happy as possible, cries very little, and begins to laugh and even *crow*, which at six weeks old is early. She is to be baptized in London on May 13, and named *Louise* (the Prince's mother) *Caroline* (the old Duchess of Gotha, for whom we are in mourning) and *Alberta* or *Albertine*, after the Prince. The others are all very fond of her, calling her "*la nouvelle*." They are all very well, much better here than in London even, though there they ailed nothing, but they are now in plump rosy looks and growing fast. . . .

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
May 11, 1848.

. . . This morning I walked over to St. James's Place to see Mary and Caroline and Kitty and Catherine dressed for the Court. . . . The Queen was for once a little tired, with the great heat, and 284 presentations—the average number being 110!

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lord Lyttelton.

May 24, 1848.

. . . MY DEAR GEORGE,—I have one thing always in my head ever since I spent a minute's leisure reading the *Times* yesterday. It is your having been put among the Colonization Committee of Management.² I am quite beset by the idea of that project, and have

¹ Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll.

² Lord Lyttelton was one of the founders of the Canterbury settlement in New Zealand.

dreams of distant days, when, if it prospers, some of my race will go to make up a Corinthian capital there. I do think it promises to be an immense event and national deliverance. . . .

Catherine [Mrs. Gladstone] tells me Mary is much better, from quinine and dancing with the Duke of Devonshire! . . . I had five minutes of his [Mr. Gladstone's] quite *unique* conversation. Living with him ought to make anybody wise and good. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

June 20, 1848.

. . . To-day Althorp¹ goes to Harrow. He seems to me a very nice civil gentlemanlike boy, and I trust will get on well with the others. Mrs. Atwood said a valuable word in his praise—that he had earned the greatest respect from all his schoolfellows hitherto by his remarkable truth and rectitude. This is an immense comfort, the very thing I believe one would choose if obliged to fix on a single bright point.

London seems pretty quiet. It is said to be only a *portentous lull*, but I trust it may lead to nothing bad. . . .

July 25, 1848.

. . . I wonder if you read the *Times* of yesterday, with the Saturday's debate on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus in Ireland; Sir Robert Peel's speech seems to have been so fine. It is an awful event, but I trust it may stop the civil war. . . .

Ireland was in a state of grave distress and unrest, mainly owing to the ravages of the potato famine, although the British Government had voted several millions to relieve the sufferings of the people. O'Connell had now disappeared from the scene, and Smith O'Brien aspired to the lead of the Young Ireland party. His attempt at a revolution, however, was a miserable failure, and he himself was captured hiding in a cabbage garden. He was sentenced to death, but

¹ The late Earl Spencer.

the sentence was commuted to transportation. In 1857 he was allowed to return to Ireland.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

OSBORNE HOUSE, August 1, 1848.

. . . All very peaceful indoors. Governesses "reconciled," and dear Princessy playing a smooth arpeggio in the room beneath this to crown all. The poor child has been now perfectly good ever since we came here. I do trust it may please God to complete His work and make her prove really a fine character, as she has always been *all but*, to so strange a degree. She continues to reflect and observe and reason like a very superior person, and is as affectionate as ever.

. . . Miss Hildyard sat at work while Prince of Wales, Princess Royal, and Prince Alfred were at play. Prince of Wales took a picture-book to show Prince Alfred. "Look, dear, at all the pretty pictures—oh, not that one! I think" (turning confidentially to Miss H.) "he does not know yet about Samson. It is only a strong man—see" (to Prince Alfred) "how strong he was carrying those gates!" Just then Princess Royal left her play and came up saying, "Oh, you are quite right, dear Bertie—don't explain that to him. We must never do too much with little minds." In those words. . . .

OSBORNE,
August 4, 1848.

. . . Poor Lady Ormonde! I saw her yesterday actually roaming about to meet the servant who brings her letters, that she might not lose one minute's happiness by missing her lord's *billet-doux* till it got to the house. So *beautiful* she looked! . . .

Lord Ormonde had gone over to see after his estates in Ireland during the famine and riots.

OSBORNE,
August 6, 1848.

. . . Lady Ormonde came smiling to her mother two or three evenings ago, saying she wanted to borrow a

little money, Lord O.'s long absence having made her run short. It was supplied and much laughed over, and next morning Lady Harriet heard that she had set off for Ireland! Could not stand any longer being here and he there, near what might become danger; and knowing very well "Mama" would not give leave, she never asked. Her two eldest children come here this afternoon. I hope all is *really* safe and quiet in Ireland now.

Prince Affy is in great beauty, all blue and silver, bewildered with presents, and much preferring to *all* a penny trumpet given by Princess Royal, bought with her own shilling. Among the toys are two small balloons inflated with gas, and made of silk, which Martin was clever enough to contrive. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Countess of Pembroke.

OSBORNE, August 7, 1848.

. . . You sometimes apologize for writing me a long letter. What do you think of this? Was there ever such a pamphlet! And nothing about Smith O'Brien yet, though I can't get him—odious man!—or his sister or his mother, out of my head. It is very bad politics; but Miss Hildyard and I have just agreed we could not help wishing he had got away to Kentucky or somewhere out of the way. The notion of his being actually put to death, so awfully guilty as he is, is *shuddering!*

Sr. LEONARDS-ON-SEA,

August 14, 1848.

. . . My brother has gone to London, so I succeed to his room—much better than having to paddle backwards and forwards to the hotel, in the uninterrupted straight downpour we have had for almost twenty-four hours now—from a sky of lead, upon a sea of ditch water. It is awful—destroying the harvest—a judgement of God. I want to find the passage where the four great judgements are threatened at once—"noisome beasts, famine, war, and pestilence." The former alone we are not threatened with now. Which reminds me to beg you to be prepared with what Dr. Duke and Mr. Hodgson prescribe as the best

thing to take in case of cholera. . . . Everybody agrees in expecting its arrival now daily. God's will be done! . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE, October 14, 1848.

. . . I have read all the "Discipline of Life."¹ It is rather pretty, very well written, and evidently by a refined and pure-minded lady. The dialogue exceedingly good, and some notion of character, but no great interest; and so entirely and unmixedly love stories that they are almost cloying. There is nothing but jiltings and flirtings, and all in the regular *grand monde* of last season's date. Still I respect Emily for trying, and she has succeeded to my very great wonder, as you know I venerate a power of writing *any* book. But the experience of attachments and disappointments it shows is almost uncomfortable to think of in an unmarrying old young lady. The whole, in one vast lump like a good soufflé, is gone out of my head already—not a trace of all the "surpassing beauties" and "dark-eyed heroes" left!

To-day we expect a curious visitor, whom I shall really take a little bit of trouble to get a sight of, for the sake of after times—not my own, probably. The Duchess of Parma—*Mademoiselle de France*.² She is said to be the Lady Clanricarde of Europe. The cleverest woman extant, and likely to cut a figure in history. Everybody seems to expect a reaction in favour of her family in France, and she is said to be very busy in promoting it. Her husband is the famous, ugly, wild, vulgar boy, who was called *Filthy Lucre*.

The Queen has had another dreadful upset—this outburst at Vienna,³ which is full of uncles and cousins of hers. . . .

¹ Published anonymously in three vols. in 1848; it was by Lady Emily Ponsonby.

² Daughter of the Duc de Berri, son of Charles X. Her husband was Duke of Lucca before succeeding to Parma.

³ This was the insurrection in Vienna, which ended in the abdication of the Emperor Ferdinand in favour of his nephew, Francis Joseph, the present Emperor.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. W. E. Gladstone.

October 14, 1848.

. . . The Queen has returned in her usual devoted, passionate admiration for the Highlands. Leaving them is always a case of actual *red eyes*; and this year's trip, with its amusing and eventful journey home again, was not less agreeable than the former ones. All such recollections have been sadly blighted by the horrid passage from Osborne; the storm, and danger, and, far worse, the shocking accident actually witnessed close to the *Fairy*, have altogether done a rare wonder—made the Queen ill. Her nerves were so entirely upset that, although relieved at first by a flood of tears when the accident occurred, she has not been well ever since—nervous and head-achey. Today, I am happy to say, all is right again, though Her Majesty is sadly shocked at the Vienna news. Many of her nearest relations are settled there, and there is ground for anxiety about them, besides the alarming public events. . . .

Here follows an account of the accident:

WINDSOR,

October, 1848.

As the *Fairy* was drawing near to the magnificent Channel fleet of line-of-battle ships, a sudden and very violent squall arose, and just before the yacht's course (not by her running foul of it) a boat full of people upset, and went down. The Prince saw it happen, saw the men all struggling in the waves, threw up his arms, and called out over and over again to Lord Adolphus to stop the yacht, in hopes of helping. Lord Adolphus, like a good officer, *wide* awake to his peculiar duty, let down a boat to go and help, as other ships had done. But on the Prince repeating his entreaty and command to stop the yacht in hopes of being more useful, he simply answered aloud, "No, sir, I won't," adding that the squall was such, the *Fairy* was hardly safe herself, and that with the Queen on board he would run no risk. "You may order it yourself, sir, but on your own responsibility." Meanwhile, imagine the horror of all on board! The Queen

burst into tears. The children *saw it all*, and were most deeply impressed. Even Prince Alfred kept describing the look of the drowning man. They began the day thinking of it (four men at least were lost). The Princess Royal said it had been in her mind all night. I almost hope it will prevent their crossing in doubtful weather in the *Fairy* again; for, only think, there *really was danger*; the yacht had some trifling bolt or screw wrong, and it was particularly necessary to manage everything right.

You know by this time Lord Carlisle¹ is dead. Without any particular feeling for him, it upset me rather, and I feel much about it. His name and look and manner all belong to many very old stories and times in my life; and his dear old wife² will be so heavily afflicted, after forty-six years of devoted virtuous affection, and the last four, of devoted care. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

[WINDSOR], October, 14, 1848.

. . . The Princess Margaret of Parma (doesn't it sound like a name from the Middle Ages?) aged twenty-one months, paid a visit to the Princess Helena of England just now, which I mention chiefly for the name's sake. An ugly Princess is the visitor, just like her hideous Papa, but a good child, and most affectionate with her hostess, who did nothing but kiss and hug her. The famous Mademoiselle is immensely fat, and lively, but not remarkable on a short acquaintance, and, for the daughter of a hundred kings, vulgar in look and manner—so I hear; I've not seen her. . . .

. . . I have been to the school, which is a very nice one—industrial, and cleverly managed, and remarkably sweet and fresh and clean and royal. It costs the Queen £1,000 a year. Mrs. Anson appears to advantage there—very active and intelligent. . . .

¹ George Howard, sixth Earl of Carlisle (1773-1848), was a member of the Cabinet of "All the Talents" in 1806, and is best known as Lord Morpeth, under which name he sat in the House of Commons for over thirty years.

² Georgiana Cavendish, daughter of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 19, 1848.

. . . I have had a pleasant morning—all accounts settled and quite uninterrupted lessons, which with my present pupils are as soothing as they used to be worrying with *les ainés*. Prince Alfred continues brilliantly intelligent and very attractive. He does nothing new, except a very little geography, and that he remembers from day to day strangely. But he begins to read so as to understand at once, and his dear calm, penetrating blue eyes are so expressive and so earnest, he must turn out well, I do think. Just had to interrupt an incipient coquettish flirtation begun by Princess Alice with Mons. Nestor while he dressed her hair! . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,
October 23, 1848.

. . . I wished Lord John joy of Lizzy Elliot,¹ and he took it very affectionately, but soon turned to me with a childlike expression, and said, as Prince Alfred might: “But they will have no money at all.” Just the way of wedlocks nowadays. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

November 7, 1848.—. . . At length, wonderful to relate, I have lived to see the arrival of the bit of tweed from Inverness, and to-morrow I trust I shall send it you. I am grieved to add that it looks even worse in the piece than in the pattern, and is now exactly like a second-best horsecloth. Charles’s bit of tartan is also most common and stupid. They are *warm* things, and that’s all; *and so cheap!*—remember that for your comfort. I am sending some narrow velvet ribbon to trim it along the tucks. I have, after deliberation and consultation, decided on the velvet being the same colour as the frocks; it is the fashion now.

¹ Lady Elizabeth Elliot, sister to Lady John Russell, and daughter of the second Earl of Minto, married Colonel Romilly in November, 1848.

Our children have the body made *double*, lined with the same ; but that might be too thick. . . .

It would seem so, indeed. This piece of family information is followed by an account of an interview with a lady's-maid, and of the duties she was willing to undertake :

She asks twenty guineas (tea and sugar to be *found* for her) ; makes all clothes except stays, including bonnets ; washes fine linen, dresses hair ; *never* wishes to live anywhere but in the country ; would gladly wash occasionally for the children, and "dress the young ladies," if necessary, at times. Expects and prefers a very quiet place ; would shew attention and deference to an *old housekeeper* I mentioned. . . .

And all for twenty guineas a year ! The early Victorian age was in some ways an enviable period.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

April, 1849.

. . . We are all going on very well. One great comfort is my observing every moment more and more the blessed improvement of the Princess Royal. She is becoming capable of self-control and principle and patience, and her wonderful powers of head and heart continue. She *may* turn out a most distinguished character. . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE, June 8, 1849.

. . . "Et bien, Madame ! voilà le carnaval fini !" Do you remember Princess Launcelotti's sad words at Rome ? Our carnival came to a brilliant end last night. A beautiful ball again—beyond the first, because of the reels and Scotch jigs, which last were certainly the wildest and merriest dances I ever saw, and performed with such spirit and grace, on such an immense platform, as to make Lord Breadalbane look young, and Lady Rachel Russel beautiful ! . . .

Lady Lyttelton wrote another account of the same ball :

. . . I spent a pleasant evening, having *beigewohnt* the beautiful ball in the Waterloo Chamber. The scene so striking to a *bysitter!*—the old Duke standing just under his own heroic portrait. He and two more were, I think, being alone survivors of all the warriors and statesmen who were looking down upon a new race of “fair women and brave men.” The event of the evening was unsentimental—someone (nobody knows who) having lost his shoe, which went spinning and gliding over the smooth floor during the waltz. . . . Lady Victoria Talbot looked like her name—very noble and handsome.¹ I ended my evening by a long talk in a window with Sarah Mary² during the country-dance—“that I *caun't daunce*,” as she said; so we sat talking over her children's characters, and her own most conscientious and zealous and tender maternal cares, so as to do one good to hear her. She looks well for her, and seems very happy and nice. . . .

OSBORNE,
July 8, 1849.

. . . Sir Robert Peel and his wife and daughter (the latter prettier than I had fancied at first³) are *en visite*, so that there was a good squeeze at church, and a most indecent, scrambling, extra-parochial congregation, overflowing into the churchyard. . . .

OSBORNE HOUSE,
July 20, 1849.

. . . I have actually completed the examination of the old letters, and those I have left are all at your disposal to read hereafter. The job has strangely shortened the last twelve years, and not beautified the present to me. But there are two sides to the picture, and I must try to look at the brightest, or at least to

¹ Eldest daughter of the eighteenth Earl of Shrewsbury; died unmarried in 1856.

² Sarah Mary, daughter of the Hon. Henry Compton Cavendish. She married the second Earl of Cawdor in 1843.

³ Eliza. She married the Hon. Francis Stonor in 1855, and died in 1881.

look not bitterly on the dimness which I cannot dispel, and which ought to look like morning twilight if all were as it should be. . . . I must just say how struck I am on reading the boxful of family history, with the beauty of two characters coming out on all occasions and on every trial—my Father's and my eldest Brother's; the latter *almost* the best, scarcely ever failing to be kind and true to the bottom. . . .

OSBORNE,
July 22, 1849.

. . . As to us, the fête is not worth a line. It was noisy, merry, and intensely boring, as usual. In the middle of the interminable country-dance on the green, nothing but footmen and housemaids pounding away their ale, and the yachts' crews running in sacks and dancing hornpipes, with the *beaux restes* of a huge dinner in an enormous tent hard by. Lady Charlemont,¹ poor soul! who thought something in the *grand genre* ought to be said, remarked, "There is no appearance, I think, of *distress* among the lower classes here?" not as a joke, but a modest political enquiry, fit for "the clubs." She is most cracky, but looking so handsome. The Queen is going to draw her profile. . . .

Lady Lyttelton began the next letter in a depressed strain, the Royal Family being away in Scotland, but she cheered up on their return.

October, 1849.

. . . I can hardly believe I am the writer of the above, so great is the revolution produced by the royal return. They are all well, strong, active, merry, and blooming. And, above all, Princess Royal so enormously improved in manner, in temper, and conduct altogether as really to give a bright promise of all good. You can't think how many little traits of her Miss Hildyard has already told me, or how they are confirmed by her manner so altered *en beau!* Her talent and brilliancy naturally have lost no ground. She may *turn out* something remarkable. At my

¹ Anne Birmingham, Countess of Charlemont, widow of the second Earl. She and her sister, Lady Leitrim, were two famous Irish beauties, and she was at this time sixty-eight years old, and died at the age of ninety-five. She was very absent-minded.

window just now she began with much foreign gesture, quite naturally though, lamenting over the leaving Scotland. "Oh, where are the mountains! I look all around for the dear mountains! And the river! It was like a silver ribbon binding all together, *so beautiful!*" She repeats numberless long German verses by heart, and seems to have got on much in her lessons, though they have been so incessantly out. And Miss Hildyard says their kindness to the poor—visiting them and beginning to *take in* what poverty is: Prince Alfred's manner to the cottagers—all so delightful. . . .

OSBORNE HOUSE,
October 4, 1849.

. . . All healths are good here, in and out of the Palace, though the royalties, grown up and growing, spend much time during the heaviest gales and rains racing up and down my pet gallery (the open one) in a way that would kill down most families speedily. We have had an awful equinoctial gale, with deluges of rain, ending in a thunderstorm last night. This morning is lovely; blue sky and fleecy clouds and sparkling sea, and the autumnal beauty on the woods, quite poetical; enough to counteract my professional business, in which I am now quite embarked again—accounts, tradesmen's letters, maids' quarrels, bad fitting of frocks, desirableness of rhubarb and magnesia, and, by way of intellectual pursuits, false French genders and elements of the multiplication table. The children are all very nice, improved essentially by Scotland. . . .

OSBORNE HOUSE,
October 5, 1849.

. . . Lucy¹ amused me by a Scotch old lady's common saying in a dull party (her name being Barbara, she calls herself *Bawbee*), "Bawbee's no diverted!" And certainly we agreed with her, for so dull a dining down I never performed. The silences were so dead, so long. Till at last, when the Prince and the gentlemen had withdrawn to a noisy game of billiards, very enviably, the Queen began to talk over her wild Highland life, to the delight of Lucy, and

¹ Miss Lucy Kerr, one of the Queen's ladies.

very pleasantly—that Scotch air, Scotch people, Scotch hills, Scotch rivers, Scotch woods, are all far preferable to those of any other nation in or out of this world; that deer-stalking is the most charming of amusements, etc., etc. The chief support to my spirits is that I shall never see, hear, or witness these various charms. This soothing thought helps me to smile on happily. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

OSBORNE, October 9, 1849.

DEAREST CHILD,—I wrote to you this morning, little thinking I should have to write or speak to you so soon again. But I must try. You would be so shocked if you saw it first in the papers, the news which has filled us all with grief. Mr. Anson¹ is dead! Alas! that I should have to tell of his death, whom I thought but three years ago the image of health and youth and power of mind and body. And strange it is, it is quite true, that to us all it came with as great a shock of surprise as if we had not known how probable it was at any moment. . . . Every face shows how much has been felt. The Prince and Queen in floods of tears and quite shut up. It is to them a heavy loss indeed, irreparable—I mean that so warm a *friend* they can hardly expect to find again, in ever so trustworthy and efficient a servant and minister. How can *she* live on, poor thing! “A widow indeed and desolate.” The Queen is very anxious her child should be spared.² I can’t quite feel so. It would be such an anxiety of every moment. Better be detached at once, and strive for peace from above, and that alone! . . .

On October 30 Prince Albert, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal, Lord John Russell, and others, formally opened the new Coal Exchange, which had been built from the designs of

¹ Private secretary to Prince Albert.

² The child, a daughter, was born a few months later. Mrs. Anson married again in 1855.

Mr. J. B. Bunning. The Royal party went from Whitehall Stairs to Thames Street by water, and returned the same way.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. W. E. Gladstone.

WINDSOR CASTLE,
November 5, 1849.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,—. . . You want to know about the royal city visit? It was magnificent, and delightful to see and hear. To me, who have little experience in such scenes, it was really most impressive. The weather was *Italian*—not a bit of fog, or cold, or wind. St. Paul's seen as clearly as a country church up to the cross, and *on the cupola* sat many people. Every inch of ground, every bridge, roof, window, and as many vessels of all sorts as could lie on the river, leaving our ample passage clear, were covered, close packed, with people. And the thought that all were feeling alike, both for the Queen and the poor little fair-headed child they cheered, was overpowering. He and his sister behaved very well, civilly, and nicely. But they could not, of course, feel all that *I* felt. The Prince was perfect in taste and manner, putting the Prince of Wales forward, without affectation, and very dignified and kind himself.

The most striking time to me was, after landing, the procession, along a long covered gallery, which held many thousand people each side of the Prince and children. The cheers close to us and the countenances, every one looking so *affectionately*, quite like parents, on the two little creatures, stretching over one another to see and smile at them, I never shall forget. The Rotunda is handsome, and was filled all over with people in full dresses like the Opera House, and they made a thundering applause, clapping hands, as soon as the royal party came in. The person (a gentleman he seemed) who managed the children's luncheon (which was upstairs, and not at the great public banquet table), when he brought them some wine, which they took very civilly and modestly, actually *shed tears*, and was obliged to leave the room. What a striking curious thing is that loyalty! And how deep and strong in England! —'s speech was most

pompous, and he is ridiculous in voice and manner. And his immense size, and cloak, and wig, and great voice, addressing the Prince of Wales about his being the "pledge and promise of a long race of Kings," looked quite absurd. Poor Princey did not seem at all to guess what he meant. So I have told you a dreadful long story; but you are, I know, very loyal, and will like to know how it went off.

The Queen was *wretched* at being prevented from going to see the children received on their first *State* occasion. Everybody in full dress, liveries like the Drawing-Rooms. And all sorts of old feudal city customs—the swans (live ones) in *their barge*, with their keeper; the Lord Mayor's barge, quite dazzling, just ahead of ours, and he and all the functionaries in *new* robes of scarlet cloth or crimson velvet. And such floods of sunshine all the time, and an incessant thundering of "God save the Queen" by a succession of bands, and the bells, and the Tower guns—enough to drive one mad! . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE, November 18, 1849.

. . . We have had a *very* fine sermon to-day. I was glad the old Duke was there, though, to be sure, he could not hear it; but he may hear people praise it. The sermon was *tout uniment* against murder—apropos of the Mannings.¹ Mr. Wellesley² gave us the very strongest and most powerfully Christian interpretation of murder, as meaning the shortening or withering of another's life by ill-usage, slander, ill-temper, harsh words, or of our own by intemperance, laziness, etc., and every look or action springing from hatred, revenge, or malice. It was awfully searching, and he wound up many passages by a penetrating question, "Can any of us answer fearlessly that we are without sin on this point?" I am not able to give you an extract, but I hope you will perceive, by my having

¹ Manning and his wife were hanged for the murder of their lodger.

² The Rev. the Hon. Gerald Wellesley, Chaplain to Queen Victoria; afterwards Dean of Windsor.

become a beautiful pattern of soft gentleness, what a good sermon it was! . . .

WINDSOR CASTLE,

November 19, 1849.

. . . Last evening was amusing enough, thanks to the Duke of Wellington, who made a great joke by beginning to talk as loud as thunder to the Queen, by whom he sat, about a matter of such serious and critical and difficult State importance, that it ought only to have been alluded to in *Cabinet*. He was evidently quite unaware how loud he talked. The Queen blushed over and over, and at last succeeded in screaming out upon some other subject. But he went on: "Yes, Madam. That is what *I* am driving at now. Whether *I* shall carry my point *I* am not sure. Lord John says if—" etc., etc. I really felt ashamed to have heard as much as I did. . . .

November 20, 1849. . . . Yesterday's dinner was not unpleasant either. I sat of course by H.R.H., who is always a nice neighbour, and the other side was Baron Stockmar—very comfortable and easy. Then all the evening I had the great luck to be close wedged by Sir Robert Peel, who was in his most conversable mood, and so very agreeable; I never enjoyed any talk more. His charming daughter does me good to look at, tho' no real beauty, and strangely like *him*. But such a delightful expression of youthful, modest intelligence, such magnificent hair, and such a quiet, maidenly manner, make up a pretty object indeed! . . .

Thursday, November 22, 1849. . . . Yesterday morning (you must hear the story of the disastrous birthday—read it all first yourself, please, because a *little* should not be much talked about, tho' no secret in reality) a shooting-party set out, and the Queen and Prince of Wales and Lady Canning soon followed to see the Prince and the gentlemen, among whom were Lord Canning¹ and Colonel Grey, shoot a grand *battue*. All

¹ Charles John was the third son of the Right Hon. George Canning, whose widow was created a Viscountess in the Irish peerage soon after her husband's death. He succeeded to the title in 1837, and for many years was M.P. for Warwick. From 1841 to 1846 he was Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and in 1856 he was appointed Governor-General of India, in which post he had to bear the brunt of the Mutiny.

were duly ranged in line, and the Queen and Lady Canning placed safely. A pheasant having fallen, the Prince desired it might be picked up, and Colonel Grey and the Prince of Wales, close to him, went to find it. Just then a shot was fired by Lord Canning. It rattled straight at Colonel Grey, shot him in the face, and all down one side and leg, very slightly, all but one face wound, which is quite insignificant, but gave pain and drew blood. The Prince of Wales was close by—not hurt. Lady Canning was of course looking on, rather more than interested, and there was some excitement when she saw her husband fall to the ground, and then raised by two men like a corpse! She shrieked aloud and ran 100 yards to him, all the time thinking *he* had been *shot dead*, as she herself told me! At first nobody could understand what had happened, but it proved to be that Lord Canning *fainted away* on having perceived the accident he had had, and the awful danger of the Prince of Wales from his unlucky shot. I believe no shot even touched the dear child. But on this part of the story and his danger the Queen wishes nothing may be said. Colonel Grey behaved with perfect temper and calmness, and poor Lady Canning is not the worse for her dreadful five seconds of terror. She says Lord Canning fainted in the same way once before when his yacht was wrecked!¹ It did him credit yesterday—people are so apt to underrate the risk they have run of killing a friend in a *battue*. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

OSBORNE, November 2, 1849.

. . . Poor Miss Devereux's marriage is deferred for a year owing to want of *means*, as money is now always called. The hitch threatened at first to be lasting, but it has been healed over. I advise you and all such of you who are wishing for pretty daughters to lay in a great stock of good nerves and calm temper against they are grown up. So many chances against a happy marriage or a peaceful old maidenhood! So much to be encountered on the road to either! And

¹ He fainted again on hearing of Lady Canning's death in 1860.

such frequent failures half-way! To be sure, I am shewing all this time how thankful *I* ought to be! . . . And so I am. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

WINDSOR CASTLE, December, 1849.

. . . I am just about to take leave of the world in every respect but as to the science of numbers. The quarterly accounts stare me in the face, and must be plunged into without delay; additions without end, and sure to be all wrong.

Miss Boyle said George's voice was sometimes heard even at Althorp "*above the thunder of the elements*"—a good description of Macaulay. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

WINDSOR CASTLE, December 24, 1849.

. . . Mr. Macaulay was very interesting to listen to, quite immeasurably abundant in anecdote and knowledge . . . too incessant a torrent of long words, reminding one of Sydney Smith's account of his conversation: "Macaulay's conversation is charming. There are *flashes of silence* sometimes; they are *so delightful!*" Then your brother George, too happy in such an opportunity of emptying his bottled-up vintage of learning, roared out volumes too; and they bellowed at each other Greek, Latin, and English at dinner, across the white nose of poor Henrietta,¹ who sat between them. . . . She reminded me of the man in "Pickwick" between the fighting editors, buffeted on one side by a carpet-bag and on the other by a poker, intended for the respective antagonists. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

December, 1849.

We have been struggling through the coldest day in this winter; so far everybody, from the tailor to Prince

¹ The Hon. Mrs. Spencer Lyttelton, Lady Lyttelton's daughter-in-law. She was the eldest daughter of Frederick Cornewall, Esq., of Delbury, co. Salop.

Albert, has come in with red nose and tingling fingers. Such a hurricane of north-east wind, such dark clouds, absent sun, and hard obduracy of black frost, I never saw. I said to the Prince: "Will your Royal Highness consent to look over the quarterly accounts which I have just brought down?" H.R.H.: "Yes, certainly, if *you* will consent to my doing reel steps all the time to warm myself." (H.R.H. was actively so doing as he spoke.) S. L. "By all means, sir, provided your Royal Highness does not insist on *my* joining." So we were sportive. . . .

In the next letter Lady Lyttelton writes of a visit from her brother George, who by this time had become a Passionist monk. The conversion of England to Roman Catholicism was his sole aim in life, and he pursued it with an almost fanatical ardour.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, February 25, 1850.

. . . Caroline may have told you I had a visit from my brother Ignatius on Saturday. Such a figure! I was indeed glad he called, not *here*, but at No. 38, where, in spite of the secluded corner, two or three people contrived to assemble to look at him. The dress, however, being of fine black broadcloth, very long and full, with an immense cape, and a white embroidery representing emblems of the Passion, is rather handsome. He wore woollen, gouty shoes, and an inordinate hat, like those in pictures of Spanish friars; as vast as a new Leghorn shape, of black felt, rolled up at the sides. He looks better and happier than for years. And his manner, if possible, more strikingly gentlemanlike and calm than ever. His business is to induce everyone to *pray*, each in their own sense of the petition, for "unity in the truth." I represented that I disagreed with him both as to the sense of the word "unity" and of the word "truth." He said that did not matter; I was to pray as *I* understood it, and the prayer will be heard as it may please God. This most *pervertible* principle he says he teaches

to all “our poorer brethren” when they say *Ave Maria* or the *Paternoster*; they are to *say* those words, but they may at the time *pray* for whatever they would wish them to mean—most wonderful bit of Jesuitry, to be sure! His intended journey to Rome is postponed, and he stays some time in town. He has called, with this curious point to carry, on the Bishop of London and on Lord John Russell, and is trying to get admitted at Lambeth; and says he intends to obtain admittance at *this* palace also to speak to the respective highest authorities for the same rather visionary purpose. I think he will meet with very stoutly closed doors in both cases.

April 19, 1850.

. . . George [Lord Lyttelton] called here yesterday after his most honourable day's work of presiding at the great meeting of the Canterbury Colony people. I never felt him in so high a place, and I trust he did his part well, and is of real use and influence in that most noble undertaking. Dear George! it is indeed the summit of my wishes that he has reached as to character and pursuits and *position*! If it should succeed!¹ But I fear the want of money will prevent it, as it does prevent so many good things. . . . It requires a *very* large quantity of money, and I fear will prove a vision. But it must, I hope, lead to something good after a failure at first. . . .

The Hon. Caroline Lyttelton to the Hon. Mrs. Henry Glynne.

BRIGHTON, *April 26, 1850.*

. . . It was odd my not saying one word about the Gladstones,² but I had only seen Catherine [Mrs. Gladstone] for ten minutes on my first arrival. . . . Dear Pussy³ looks much worn and sits very silent when there is general conversation going on, else she seems well, and says *this* time feels like a great calm after the storms before. As to

¹ The Canterbury settlement, which was founded on Church lines, proved a great success. It is now one of the most important and flourishing provinces of New Zealand.

² They had just lost one of their children.

³ Mrs. Gladstone.



SARAH, LADY LYTTELTON IN 1850.

From a drawing by J. Swinton.

him it is very remarkable what a simplicity there is about him. At one time he dwells on their sorrow, and on the blessed and elevating thoughts belonging to it, with bursts of tears often; at another, laughs so with the children, and quite enjoys shopping with Catherine, choosing their own teacake and the like. Altogether Brighton has been of great use to them both. . . .

Prince Arthur, afterwards Duke of Connaught, was born on May 1, 1850.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

BUCKINGHAM PALACE,
May 7, 1850.

DEAREST B.—Here am I writing on a Wednesday, because a fine fat Prince of the blood royal is added to the nursery, so although the operation and its consequent excitement and exertion have rather done me up, I will write, it being a *congé général*, and thank you for your welcome letter. . . . Her Majesty, bless her for a good wife and mother! never has had a better time. The children are all wild about "new brother," who has regular features and a fine complexion. So here is another yet of the numberless instances of *perfect awful*, spotless prosperity which has been bestowed on this house. May it all turn to good! . . . So good-bye, my dearest B. I am going to write bulletins.

June 12.

Mr. Gladstone and I found ourselves in an argument this morning, whether the clock had been altered *four* minutes or only *three*. On which he said gravely in very sonorous tones, "We are *arriving* at punctuality." It made me laugh and does still. He is so agreeable. I dread their departure, though I cannot *quite* enter into his politics, they are so intricate, and I am always forgetting the principle he lays down. But a very great way I go along with him—which must vastly strengthen him! . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

July 15, 1850.

... Mine is always a most solitary life—visions of fellow-creatures all about, but not one I feel much interest or connexion with except the babies. It ought to keep me sitting loose to this *bas monde* altogether. I fear it does not as much as it ought, but tends to make me only dissatisfied with my own lot in it, till I remember how wrong and thankless such a feeling is. And *then*, why, I am sorry and dissatisfied the *more*, but with *myself*, which is perhaps better, though only a *choice among discontents*, very poor and old ladylike, in the middle of what George in his witty moods raves about as the “cream and quintessence and flower of life”—viz., *Court!* . . .

OSBORNE,

July 22, 1850.

... Last evening *such* a sunset! I was sitting gazing at it and thinking of Lady Charlotte Proby's verses, when from an open window below this floor began suddenly to sound the Prince's *orgue expressif*, played by his masterly hand. Such a modulation, minor and solemn, and ever changing, and never ceasing, from a piano like Jenny Lind's holding note, up to the fullest swell, and still the same “fine vein of melancholy”! And it came in so exactly as an accompaniment to the sunset. How strange he is! He must have been playing just while the Queen was finishing her toilette. And then he went to cut jokes and eat loads at dinner, and nobody but the organ knows what is *in him*—except, indeed, by the look of his eyes sometimes. . . .

OSBORNE,

July 25, 1850.

... I have just had to answer a letter to the Queen from Caroline Courtenay, announcing Lord Eastnor's¹ marriage, and full of praise of Miss Pattle. Her picture at the Exhibition, which has the rare fate of being

¹ Afterwards the third Earl Somers. He married in 1850 Miss Virginia Pattle, and was father of Adeline, Duchess of Bedford, and Lady Henry Somerset.

admired by the Prince and *me* too, is said to bear no degree of likeness to the lady, which is a pity, and will prevent the painter¹ from supplanting Winterhalter, who has, by the way, painted a really beautiful portrait of Lady Constance,² and very like. Her chief fault, a heavy wreath of artificial roses on such a lovely young head—so far better unadorned. . . .

August 1, 1850. . . . Lady Jocelyn is come, in great beauty. At Southampton she had run against at the station, and of course was escorted hither by, Lord Clarendon, also coming here; her last thoughts about him having been on his having a most disagreeable and barely peaceable public correspondence with Lord Jocelyn, some little time ago. However, she had to take his arm and be “so glad to see him,” and quite as great friends they arrived. Such are a Lady-in-Waiting’s miseries. . . .

August 10, 1850. . . . It is indeed a beautiful and blessed letter to have received from Mr. Young. No, I shall not show it to the Queen, because Her Majesty would see *nothing* in it all through but the name of St. Ambrose, and conclude Mr. Young is a Puseyite. . . . Such merry voices sounding from all over the lawn in at my window, and a pretty sight to see and think of. Old Count Mensdorff recovering from his gout in a wheeling-chair drawn by a tiny pony, the Queen standing by, most attentively taking care of him. The Prince and “his two boys” noisily and eagerly managing Prince Alfred’s new kite, which is unrivalled in soaring ambition, and really gets almost out of ken. Then plenty of red coats dotted about, waiting, and Cowley and the dogs scouring about, all in a Wouvermanns light and south-west breeze, quite reviving. . . .

August 12, 1850. . . . I am again going to *dine down*, to help to work off the old Duke of Cambridge, who is said to be somewhat troublesome, by asking, in his good Father’s tone, such questions as, “How do you get on here? Rather dull, hey?” within two chairs of the Queen at a small table. The Duchess of Kent arrived safe at Edinburgh after a day’s journey of

¹ The painter was G. F. Watts, R.A.

² Lady Constance Leveson-Gower, afterwards Duchess of Westminster.

sixteen hours, by express railroad! I suppose, from Frogmore at one pull. . . . The Duke of Cambridge at Chatsworth the other day, on his knees in the middle of family prayers, very loud before the assembled household, "A d——d good custom this!" Also in a similar moment at Fawsley, while Mrs. Gage, the daughter of the house, was reading prayers, he remarked aloud, "*Very* well indeed! A good clear voice!" . . .

OSBORNE,
July 31, 1850.

Princess Royal standing by me to-day, as I was trying a few chords on the pianoforte, was pleased and pensive like her old self. "I like chords, one can *read* them. They make one sometimes gay, sometimes sad. It used to be too much for me to like formerly." The "*reading*" is quite an original thought.

CHAPTER XVI

1850-1868

AT the close of 1850 Lady Lyttelton resigned her post at Court, and it is gratifying to find her writing in all the sincerity of family correspondence : "The result chiefly left on my mind is a fresh admiration for the candour, truth, prudence, and manliness of the Prince, and the goodness of the Queen, too. I wish I could catch some of their good qualities : it would be something better to carry away than a pension."

From this time forward the letters become scanty, but there is no falling off in their interest. The opening of the Crystal Palace, the inauguration of an era of peace which was so soon to be followed by the Crimean War, the marriage of the Princess Royal, and the death of the Prince Consort, are among the chief events referred to. The last letter of the series contains an account of a visit paid to Lady Lyttelton, at her house in Stratton Street, by the Crown Prince and Princess of Prussia.

Ever since the first appearance of "Tracts for the Times," the "religious revival" had produced a profound impression in England. From 1847 till 1850 the famous Gorham case had passed through a complicated and apparently contradictory series of legal decisions. This served to keep alive and inflame party spirit, and when public opinion was thus aroused, Pope

Pius IX., believing apparently that the mass of the English people were on the point of joining the Church of Rome, issued a Bull for the appointment of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in England. This, and an injudicious manifesto by Cardinal Wiseman, aroused a storm of indignation in the country. On December 10 Queen Victoria wrote: "This unfortunate Papal aggression business is still keeping people in a feverish state of wild excitement."

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. C. Girdlestone.¹

WINDSOR CASTLE,

December 7, 1850.

. . . We live in sadly troublous and uneasy times, and schism and strife are very odious to witness; though I dare say they are better for the good cause than sleepy, prosperous apathy. The injudicious innovations in external matters will, I think, receive a check from this home-thrust lesson and reminder of their danger. But how ashamed one feels that the difference of a candle, or a bow, or a white or black dress, should influence our soul's belief and feelings! We are but very poor creatures here below.

I take this opportunity of telling you that I have resigned my place; and next month shall, if I live, take leave of Court. I had long felt incompetent, from age and health, for active duties here; and now I have a mournful reason added to all others, and feel it a duty no longer to be tied up from being of use sometimes to my dear little motherless grandchildren;² and, above all, not to prevent my daughter, by her attendance upon me, from being with them as much as she wishes to be. The Queen has behaved on this occasion with the kindness which has never varied for the twelve years of my service, and all is smoothly settled. I hope you will approve my step. . . .

¹ The Rev. Charles Girdlestone was Vicar of Wordsley, a parish in the "Black Country," a few miles from Hagley. He was an Evangelical clergyman of some note.

² Mrs. Glynne died on October 3, 1850.

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon.
W. H. Lyttelton.*

WINDSOR CASTLE, December 9, 1850.

DEAREST BILLY,— . . . I will make known to the Queen that Mrs. Conyngham Ellis's book has arrived, when it shall have arrived, and also explain what it is. And assuredly I do not think her "impertinent" for sending it *to me*—I do think her rather *officious*, as I do all the good people who send their good works to assist in the royal children's education, and "to cause important truths to be instilled into their minds"—seeing that the said truths, if the Queen *wishes* them to be instilled, will doubtless be instilled, *without* the said books—and if Her Majesty should not so chuse they will *not*, even *with* them. . . . I should say that anything about Butler's "Analogy," however diluted, is unfit for a child of ten years old, and, moreover, that it is a thousand pities to dilute it for any purpose. The lady's letter rather smells of the Bishop of Oxford¹ thinking her the cleverest woman in England, which can do no lady good. Out of all this make a civil answer please, and the shorter the better. . . .

December 31, 1850.—. . . I never was more knocked up than last night, by only the sort of extra running about which occasionally falls upon me, and several long standings with Her Majesty over *the mess*—which I can't write. It is over. The result chiefly left on my mind is a fresh admiration for the candour, truth, prudence and manliness of the Prince, and the goodness of the Queen, too. I wish I could catch some of their good qualities; it would be something better to carry away than any pension. . . . So now I must go to my very unpleasant toil of counting out jewels, comparing inventories, and behaving like a shop foreman, which will last me many days, and be wretchedly ill done at last. . . .

Our poor little dove Loo-Loo² is ill to-day, a feverishness; keeping her room. Princess Royal, with her usual quickness, meeting Thurston on the stairs, said, "A day of calamities! Three Princesses lame with chilblains, two Princes in disgrace, and Louise ill in

¹ Bishop Wilberforce.

² Princess Louise,

her room." The Queen has a stiff neck, Mr. Wellesley a sore throat, sun not shining, cold wind, all dull and disagreeable enough. I read your letter occasionally to do me good. I am going now to look after the sick child, and then to evening service. . . . Dear Principina much better, having had some toast and tea, the first food since yesterday, and desired to sit up, in "Loo-Loo's own chair." The world quite *in statu quo* otherwise. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

January 2, 1851.

. . . How pretty and true is all you say about New Year's Day! I think I took but little notice of it, stupidly. (On recollection, I did, but perhaps not in letters.) It was rather, to me, over-bothered by the children's dance, which I am happy to say not only went off well, but has left no one the worse. The Prince of Wales's Highland fling, a sort of difficult and athletic hornpipe, might almost be compared to Lord Douglas's¹—so active and nimble, and in such *perfect* time! He and all of them were dressed in George II.'s costume, and the Prince of Wales looked very handsome—the image of the Pretender Charles Edward. Miss Wemyss was there, quite beautiful, and dancing à *ravir*. Our children make it quite a *duty*, and if Papa and Mama approve they are satisfied. It does not seem at all a case of vanity, and breaks them of shyness. It took place before dinner, *after* which there was a thundering double-band concert, chiefly Beethoven, in the Waterloo Chamber, which of course I did not *beiwohnen*.

January 10, 1851.

. . . The royal children's charade was excellent last night, so well they did it. Princess Helena as "Le Marquis" was so good; and to see her with a lorgnon held up with such an air, spying at Prince Alfred, who was a capital quiz of a Bailli, and exclaiming, "Bailli, vous êtes impayable, parole d'honneur!"

¹ Afterwards Duke of Hamilton. He was famed for his beautiful dancing.

I don't think Keeley¹ could have done it better. Prince of Wales as a peasant, with long fair curls and a pretty hat, looked quite beautiful; acted very well. Nobody to see them but Lady Douro, Lady John, and the Duchess of Sutherland. Quite right. . . .

January 14, 1851.—. . . I had a pleasant long p.p.c. visit from Mr. Wellesley last evening, at his own request. He continues to be enchanted with dear Princessy. "Only one lesson," he said, in his usual downright way, "was rather broken in upon, Her Majesty having come in to hear it. Now, *she* had better have staid away." It made him shy, and the pupil, too, a little.

I have read and greatly hate "*Eugenie Grandet*";² and now I am working hard in all daylight moments at my chenille work, to finish it; and I have asked for a parting audience from the Duchess of Kent; and I feel *un pied et demi en l'air*—very empty and light, and *loose and uncomfortable*. . . .

January 18, 1851.—. . . Kitty will tell you every detail of my last moments at Windsor better than I can write them. The last day was unpleasant enough throughout—nothing but good-bying. Then in the evening I was sent for to my last audience in the Queen's own room, and I quite broke down, and could hardly speak or hear. I remember the Prince's face, and a few words of praise and thanks from them both; but it is all misty, and I had to stop on the private staircase and have my cry out before I could go up again. Then I made all my presents, with very full success. Yesterday morning, alas! the darlings all came up in succession, and a bad spot of road it was to get through. I dare neither look back nor look forward. Upward, in trembling and fear and humiliation, I can look, with something but not enough, of hope and trust for them for whom I undertook so much and have done so little—them, whose sins and final doom I have in some sort to answer for, and *how?* They all cried, and were most touching. The Prince of Wales, who has seen so little of me lately, cried and seemed to feel most. The Princess Royal said many striking and feeling and clever things,

¹ Robert Keeley (1793-1869), the famous actor, who earned a great reputation in comedy.

² By Balzac.

especially on her last visit to me upstairs the night before. Princess Alice's look of soft tenderness I never shall forget; nor Prince Alfred, with his manly face bathed in tears, looking so pretty. Princesses Loo-Loo and Helena, of course, understood nothing. . . . At last we got away, and it was not till after a long nap in the railroad that I felt my job was done, and woke with a pleasant *subsided* feeling, and as if the worst was over, and the beginning of rest came into my mind. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

ALTHORP, April 25, 1851.

. . . One of the Canterbury managers going is very lamentable, as it will with the "evil-disposed" cast a slur on the undertaking, as growing popish. I feel a foreboding that George will be left *alone* some day, among all his chosen set of friends. Heaven preserve him! Do you still think there is no danger in belonging to the very High Church party?

. . . Lord J. Russell writes a kind note to Fritz,¹ saying very feeling words about "the loss of one whom Althorp once described to me as having the most perfect character he had ever known." . . .

In these days of multiplied exhibitions it is difficult to realize the public excitement at the completion of the first enterprise of the kind. That it was carried into effect at all was mainly due to the foresight and perseverance of Prince Albert, who from first to last was the moving spirit in the undertaking.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

ALTHORP, May 1, 1851.

. . . The *Times* yesterday contained some fine tho' rather enthusiastically loyal verses about the opening of the Exhibition, by Thackeray of all people! And the leading article about it is also very good. . . . Ah,

¹ On the death of Lady Spencer who died in April this year.

indeed, *yesterday*¹ is the day of days to me! Every minute of it lived over again—so precious that which no one can ever share with me! Thank you for thinking of it and mentioning it. How deep is my thankfulness for its event *now!* How many reasons increase the feeling daily, hourly! The blessed feeling of *his* being, as Miss W. Wynn says, “garnered up”—and my own unchanging desolateness is itself a comfort, too, somehow—seems to bind me to him still. Bless you, dear child!—Yours most affectionately, S. L.

May 6, 1851.

. . . Your treatise on the Exhibition is very good, and I agree so far that I have *no* enthusiasm about the trade and industry part of it, and think that passage in Prince Albert's speech a piece of mere German philosophy, worthless at best. But I can't quite think the money totally misspent. It was paid to honest poor mechanics and workmen, after all, and must have helped many a poor family over a stile, and enriched those who deserved enriching by their toil and talent honestly exerted. Also, the sight of such a gathering of nations on *any* peaceable occasion, recollecting how it has been the fruit of *one* thirty-six years' peace in Europe, ought, I think, to stir one's pleasurable feelings more than an *army* of 25,000 men would have done. But the enthusiasm, or something like it, was for the Queen's reception—the good feeling of the thousands of all ranks, who had, when so collected, such a mass of mischief in their power, and were fully expected to have used it; and, more still, the sympathy I can't help feeling with the Queen herself on witnessing the full and *unexpected* success of her husband's great undertaking, which must redound to his honour (everywhere except in London), and shew what he is made of, as to talent at least. *She* must have felt *much*, and I admire the honest *endeavour* to sanctify so deep an interest and so great an event, as it will be considered by all who look at it *en grand*. I believe it is quite universally sneered at and abominated by the *beau monde* (except Bear Ellice!²), and will

¹ The anniversary of her husband's death.

² Edward Ellice (1781-1863), the well-known Whig politician. His nickname was derived from his connection with the North-West fur-trader.

only increase the contempt for the Prince among all fine folk. But so would anything he does. . . .

HAGLEY,
August 12, 1852.

. . . We are all in a succession of rages and disgusted, reading some of "Martin Chuzzlewit." Such a nasty set of the lowest characters, and the most odious crimes painted to the life, I never thought about before. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

ROCKINGHAM CASTLE,
September 2, 1852.

. . . Caroline's p.p.c. from the Highlands was indeed a crowning winding up. And no place could have been fit to go to after Drumlanrig!¹ It will be a bright thought to turn to—so delightful to think of the owners of such magnificence of nature and art being themselves so truly good. I do hope they may be long spared, till their successor shall have gained strength and experience enough to be worthy of them. I am sorry all the same that they are putting a son to Radley. Knowing very little about it, I can't help fearing it is stamped with the dangerous mark.² . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Countess of Pembroke.

ROCKINGHAM CASTLE,
August 20, 1853.

DEAREST LADY PEMBROKE,—At least I can thank you with some knowledge of the subject for "Things to be Thought of," which I have read with great pleasure. It was so kind of you to think of sending it to me. I only wish I got any lasting good from such pleasant advice! One other wish I have. That somebody would get at the author and induce her to write a few lectures to *old ladies*. I feel that we are always sadly neglected by good-book writers, and I

¹ Drumlanrig Castle, in Dumfriesshire, the seat of the Duke of Buccleuch.

² Radley College was at that time more than suspected of "Puseyism."

fancy this lady might know how to help us. *You* want nothing of the kind, because your soft heart has kept youth warm in it ; and what is good advice to a young person is all you need. But when one's heart, from having been in its best days made of kid, becomes a bit of hard old leather, and having been always at a low temperature, cools down into a sadly chilly and dreary state, something might do good. I never find anything fit for *me*. It is tiresome to be told "not to be too fond of this world," and "not to be anxious for pleasure and amusement," and "to endure loneliness and dulness and silence" when all *I* want is to love *more*, and to smile *more*, and to be *more* amused and *more* merry, and less poky and morose and dry and grave ! Well, you won't and can't understand me ; and nobody can that is not an everyday old codger of turned sixty-six. And when that beautiful period is attained, who can write a book worth reading ? . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Lyttelton.

SPENCER HOUSE,
June 21, 1854.

. . . Lady Morley called on me yesterday, and I took Sarah¹ down to hear her talk, and she was most worthy ; rolled about in her chair with laughing. No particular *bons mots*, but incessant fun and sparkling. She said science had done so much for us—quite set us free from three old bores—space, time, and pain. "To be sure the sun had taken a new line, which was not pleasant. He has quite left off *shining*, and now only *paints portraits*." You may fancy Tallee's [Lady Sarah's] amusement. . . .

The story of the Crimean War is an oft-told tale which need not be repeated in detail here. Lady Lyttelton's niece, Miss Pole-Carew, had married General Estcourt, who died of cholera in the Crimea in 1855. The war found England, as usual, unprepared, and the news of the sufferings of the troops as winter came on produced a profound impression in

¹ Lady Sarah Spencer, daughter of Frederick, Earl Spencer.

England. The *Times*, instigated by their representative in the Crimea, the well-known "Billy Russell," carried on an attack of unusual violence on the Government and on many of the officers in the Crimea, including Lord Raglan. Many of these attacks on individuals—among whom was General Estcourt, the Adjutant-General—were most unjust. It was the system, rather than the men who administered it, that was at fault. An adverse vote in the House of Commons led to the resignation of Lord Aberdeen in January, 1855. He was succeeded by Lord Palmerston. After General Estcourt's death his widow was raised to the rank of the wife of a K.C.B.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Estcourt.

ALTHORP,

December 2, 1854.

MY DEAREST CAROLINE,—. . . You can hardly imagine how entirely unreserved are the accounts from the Crimea, which are daily read by every reader in England. The descriptions of the sufferings, and losses, and sickness, and reduced state of the army, of its discouraging failure as to the progress of the siege, of the dying off of the reinforcements, of the insufficiency of everything sent over to help the troops, are written with immense power by Mr. Russell,¹ and universally believed. I assure you the gloom and weight on one's spirits are dreadful; it appears to me that war never before was so horrible. As to comfort, or hope, or endurance in such a state of things, they *are not*, on earth; and the whole hangs over us like a dark and heavy judgment, most entirely deserved by the nation, and to be turned to good for individuals as judgments are by God's mercy; but scarcely alleviated by the flashes of earthly glory which break through the cloud. Oh how one looks back on past years of peace! How blessed they were, and how inadequately felt and thanked for! One is afraid to dwell on the immense mercies still

¹ Mr. W. H. (afterwards Sir William) Russell.

bestowed on some of us. God bless you, my dearest Caroline! You can't think how much respect I feel for you both, living in such a fiery trial, and bearing it as you do. Heaven help you for the future, as in the past!

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

ALTHORP, January 18, 1855.

. . . Nothing can well be more calamitous and awful than the Crimean news. It becomes almost insignificant *who* is to be blamed when one thinks of the effect of the blunders. But yet I cannot help feeling almost more for those (whoever they are) whose involuntary faults have done the mischief than for the peaceful dead, lying by thousands on that doomed shore. I say involuntary faults, for I do suppose *all* have striven honestly, though vainly, to avert the terrible judgment. I have a private thankfulness, that dear George is not one of the ministers. . . . I shall write to Catherine [Mrs. Gladstone] and send her the extracts. Whatever adds a mite to their knowledge of the state of things must be of use. The evil seems concentrated on the want of a road from the shore to the camp; and Colonel Alexander used to dwell upon the advisableness (before they had landed) of sending a body of navvies, to prevent such a deficiency. I should think the Quartermaster - General was the really responsible officer. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Rev. the Hon. W. H. Lyttelton.

July, 1855.

. . . Found all well. Poor Kitty is still so in health. But her spirits are rather lower as we get nearer the time when her first letter from her widowed sister must arrive. We have heard from her still at Balaclava, down to the very day when we suppose her dear husband's fatal illness began. And she writes of course in total blindness as to the impending blow, which we have been mourning for above a week, here at this distance! There is something striking and unnatural in this effect of the marvellous telegraph!

Thank God, the mercy we most wished for as a consolation and help to her has been bestowed. We are now pretty sure that she must have been *there* with him to the last; and the blessed recollection of his last moments, attended and nursed by herself, will be a lasting comfort. The death of Lord Raglan¹ and the serious illness of many other important officers all make one tremble for the result.

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Caroline Lyttelton.

ALTHORP, [Undated, 1855-56.]

... The few words about the army are rather more prosperous than usual. Oh! this morning the *Globe* does tantalize one with announcing that the Czar *has* accepted the proposed four conditions propounded as bases of negociation, and accepted them in the sense intended by the Allied Powers! This would be like a dawn of peace! But I fear it must be either untrue, or that some trick lurks under his answer, dear man. "I will not believe him yet," as Lady Pembroke complains. There was a valuable and comforting letter from the chief of all croakers, S. G. Osborne,² in the *Times* yesterday, full of praise of the amendments at Scutari, and with strong words in favour of the Ministers for their sincere and earnest endeavours to do well about the wounded, etc.

I had (while Yaddy³ and all were out) a short but agreeable visit from Lady Marian Alford⁴ with Lord Alwyne and Mr. Dickins (husband of Lady Elizabeth, their aunt). Lady Marian is much improved by a little tinge of graceful melancholy, just suiting her last stage

¹ Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in the Crimea.

² The Rev. Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne, a well-known newspaper controversialist, who had visited the hospitals at Scutari and wrote to the *Times* about them.

³ "Yaddy" was Adelaide, the second wife of Frederick, Earl Spencer. She was daughter of Sir Horace Beauchamp Seymour, brother of the fifth Marquess of Hertford. She died in 1877.

⁴ Lady Marian Alford was the daughter of the second Marquis of Northampton, and widow of Lord Alford. She died in 1888. Lord Alwyne Compton, her brother, was afterwards Bishop of Ely, and died in 1906.



SARAH, LADY LYTTELTON.

From a painting by H. Weigall at Hagley,

of mourning. We did not talk politics, or literature, or say anything that is worth remembering, but you can't think how I felt refreshed by the *brains* that would colour the little bit of conversation. They seemed all three *such* clever people! I longed to listen on. Something of the sort is so sadly absent here somehow.

ALTHORP,
May, 1857.

. . . Lord Fitzwilliam¹ and his son have just gone. Lord F. always fills me with such deep respect, by his truth and enthusiasm, and rectitude, and boundless knowledge and simplicity, that I am always glad whenever I meet him. . . . Mr. Barker is calotyping² everybody, in a tent out of doors, to catch a sunbeam.

A ball was given in July at Spencer House, at which Queen Victoria was present.

HAGLEY,
July 14, 1857.

. . . I was fortunate in getting all my *dressums*³ over quietly, and my cap was *greatly* admired by Lady Clinton, after my brother had advised a *turban*! The ball was beautiful. Two hundred people only, no crowd; the rooms magnificent, such profusions of fragrant flowers in every corner, and the dresses very pretty. My *own* appearance was distressing to my vanity; every looking-glass told me I was exactly my brother George, with a face the colour of purple cabbage, from the extreme heat of the weather. However, I was kindly recognized and spoken to by many old friends; the gentlemen all grown wizen and wrinkled and the ladies enormous! The Queen was extremely gracious, and distinguished me very much. The dear Princess looked *much* prettier than ever I saw her, and her affectionate manner to me, and pretty words of warm feeling, half made me cry. Then I was

¹ The third Earl Fitzwilliam, who had sat in Parliament as Lord Milton for nearly thirty years. He was one of the first and most consistent supporters of Parliamentary Reform and Free Trade.

² An early form of photography.

³ Glynnese. See note, p. 347.

presented to Prince Frederick,¹ and a *very* gentleman-like and pleasing young gentleman he is. I went to bed when the supper came, and was certainly a little tired ; but had a smooth journey home, and last night slept almost *nine hours*, à *mon façon*, and to-day feel as if I had been nowhere and done nothing. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Lady Charlotte Neville
Grenville.²*

HAGLEY, February 4, 1858.

It was most kind, my dear Lady Charlotte, to write me such a pleasant interesting letter. We feel alike about the dear Princess's promising marriage. I have received to-day a nice letter from my dear Miss Hildyard, who tells me that the account of the departure in the *Times* is quite correctly true ; and (what is very important for the future) that nothing could exceed the delicacy and kindness of feeling of Prince Frederick. He seemed to love his little bride the better for the pain she felt on leaving her home. She bore up wonderfully, to the very last ; and *then*, did give way, but all naturally and amiably. And as Miss Hildyard adds, "*no nonsense!*" I myself saw her alone, the week before her marriage, and I was much struck with the calm and rather serious, though happy and loving, expression of her look and manner. Not a bit of bridal *missiness* and flutter. . . . She is, I am sure, deeply attached to her husband, and full of respect for him, and I do think no prospect could well be brighter. . . .

*The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Hon. Meriel and
Lucy Lyttelton.³*

November 14, 1859.

MY DEAREST MERIEL AND LUCY,—I wish I could send you a really interesting account of my Friday audi-

¹ The Princess Royal married Prince Frederick of Prussia the following January.

² Lady Charlotte was the daughter of George, third Earl of Dartmouth ; she married George Neville Grenville, Dean of Windsor, in 1816, and died in 1877.

³ Lord Lyttelton's two eldest daughters.

ences ; but such events are apt to be disappointing, not in regard to general character, all was kindness and prosperity, but no events, or *memorabilia* (Lucy ! that word beats *you* ; pray do not follow my bad example !) I trudged up to the grand old castle, feeling most strangely both at home and abroad at every step. And after being stopped at the inner quadrangle entrance by a conscientious footman, who was over-powered when I gave my name, I got safely to the corridor, and had not been there three minutes, when the dear Princess [Royal] came in, habited and hatted and cock-feathered from her ride, looking very well, though in a *very* bad cold ; I wonder if it has not been doubled by the launch, and the weather ! She embraced me and received me *most* kindly, and took me into her magnificent sitting room, where I spent almost an hour with her, till she had to go and change her dress for luncheon. She talked much of her baby, and enquired after everybody belonging to me, and bespoke a copy of Caroline's "White Lady,"¹ which she has heard of, and seemed as happy as ever. She sent for her two young ladies-in-waiting, saying, " You would like to look at them"—the Countess Linar and the Countess Hohenthal,² both tall graceful girls, the latter beautiful. I am sorry to say that after a little talk, on introduction (both speak English perfectly) they were left standing, for nearly half an hour, opposite to the Princess and me, on our comfortable sofa. Such is, I suppose, Prussian etiquette, but it made my legs ache. The Countess Perponcher [?], who is the regular "lady," is left in charge of the baby.

I had afterwards an audience of the Queen—just as usual, but grown *much* thinner, so as to look young again. And then in the schoolroom, where Princess Alice was, looking rather tall and quite graceful. Everybody was going to luncheon, so I saw only Princess Helena and darling Prince Leopold besides. . . . Hurrah for Mr. Gladstone's election at Edinburgh!³ I suppose one ought to hurrah about it ? . . .

¹ A German fairy story translated by Miss Lyttelton.

² Countess Walpurga Hohenthal married Mr. (afterwards Sir) Augustus Paget.

³ *I.e.*, for the Lord Rectorship of Edinburgh University.

ALTHORP, December 9, 1859.

. . . I conclude Caroline gave you all the news up to yesterday, of who came (among visitors) and who is not coming ; of how pretty, like a Fairy Queen, Charlotte¹ looked and flitted about the evening before, dressed in mourning, with one brilliant little diamond high up on her fair forehead. She is gone to-day by herself through *horrid* weather, to attend the distribution of a clothing club at the dirty, pokey village of Little Brington, because she was invited by the clergyman. Her manner to everybody of all classes is just perfect, and she must be beloved by all when she is known. There never was a more *lucky*—that is, *blessed*—marriage than his, as far as his wife goes, to make up happiness, which is a great way.

Sarah is immensely happy. The staircase is magnificent ; the light is very peculiar—quite sufficient to shew off pictures and people, but a sort of character about it like what one might fancy a *golden moonlight*. Now, if that is not nonsense, *what is?* But it does express what I mean.

At 10.50 p.m. on Saturday, December 14, the Prince Consort died, after a short illness, at Windsor Castle. “The fever went on most favourably till the day previous to the awful calamity, and then it was the congestion of the lungs and want of strength of circulation which at the critical moment caused this awful result . . . He was one to whom the nation owed more than it can ever truly know.” Thus wrote Queen Victoria a few days after the event. Lady Lyttelton, when she wrote on December 15, had not received the sad tidings.

¹ Wife of John, fifth Earl Spencer, who succeeded his father in 1857, and married Miss Charlotte Seymour the same year. She was daughter of Frederick Seymour, grandson of the first Marquess of Hertford. Lady Spencer was very beautiful, and called “Spencer’s Fairy Queen.” She died in 1903.

HAGLEY,
December 15, 1861.

A line to thank you for your letter just received. Alas! we think alike on the heavy cloud that hangs over us. It is a sort of terror that never came near us before. I can't *think* of the Queen! After the first shock (if it be dispensed, indeed), where is she to turn? What friend, what stay on earth left? Her son, too—how dreadful for him to be left so soon fatherless! Oh, it is too dreadful! . . . But all will be wise and good and right; only national calamity, private wretchedness, *may* perhaps be what is best for us; and those bitter remedies I can't help dreading, though they *would* be really a benefit. To-day (Sunday) *you* will hear from Windsor; we shall know nothing.

The Queen, in her really wonderful kindness, sent me an account on the 10th (unasked for; I then believed the newspapers, before the bulletins began, that it was "a cold"), through Lady Augustus Bruce, knowing, as she said, that I should be anxious, to tell me it *had* been a feverish attack, but that all was going off favourably. So like the very best part of her character, to be thinking of others and feeling for all, even when most preoccupied herself! Alas, poor thing! more in constant want, in constant habit of consulting and leaning upon her prop than almost even any wife I ever knew. "A widow indeed, and desolate" she will be! Oh, I will try to hope!

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Watson.

December, 1861.

DEAREST LAVINIA.—Many thanks for your kind letter, and thoughts about our terrible calamity. It is pleasant to *talk over* such an event, such an awful judgment, with each other, tho' indeed it is a saddening pleasure. The *Times* is very fine about it, and especially about the Prince of Wales. A.¹ saw him at Windsor, and said "nothing could be nicer than his

¹ Probably "Althorp" (Lord Spencer).

manner and conduct." This, from a good judge, I was thankful for. The *Guardian* is excellent—so perfectly true. Indeed, as far as *I know*—and I must know much—every word of the praise in the *Times* was *quite* true, not exaggerated. It strikes one like a private bereavement. The Queen is beautifully calm, with unceasing tears, and simple and childlike, as she always is, in her real and deep grief. She says to anything proposed for her to do: "I will do it—I will do everything." The theatrical description of her calling her children together, and preaching to them about public duty directly, was quite false. She saw them all as soon as she could—went upstairs to kiss the little one in her bed, and took her to her own. The return to Osborne will be a sharp trial. Oh, such love, such a tie, a oneness, all shattered and broken off for ever on earth! She has *no* friend to turn to. The King of the Belgians is said to be coming to her; he is a kind of second father. The Princess Alice is "like an angel in the house," conquering her own intense grief to help her mother, and so gentle and tender; she is of great use and comfort to her. The worst, far the worst, is yet to come—the numberless, incessant wishes to "Ask the Prince," to "Send for the Prince," the never-failing joy, fresh every time, when he answered her call. The greater her distress or doubt or anxiety, the fuller seemed her comfort in him; and so wise, so instantly ready and sagacious, in advising or cheering her. Her greatest delight was in *obeying* him. The Almighty wants no instruments. He can order all events, and has but to will. And we shall find it so; but it may be right, and best, that we should suffer and fall, and that may be impending! . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to Mrs. Robartes.

HAGLEY,

December 20, 1861.

DEAREST JULIA,—Many, many thanks for your kind, affectionate inquiries about me. It was, and *is*, a great and sharp affliction; not quite such a *surprise* as to some others. I mean the last news was not; for I had nearly lost all hope from the very first. But it is

not a sorrow to be diminished by time. It does but grow upon one the more one thinks of it. However, as to my tough old health, it has not suffered. And I am only *flat*, and much haunted by dark thoughts. I feel perhaps the older, a little; but quite well. Every detail about the poor Queen is terrible. But she has hitherto shewn great patience and submission—seeks and finds comfort in her children; Princess Alice chiefly. The Prince of Wales also shews excellent feeling and a very nice manner. The Almighty needs *no tools* to work with! And His will—His own merciful will—*must* be done. But it may be His will—how likely!—that heavy adversity shall fall upon our long so favoured and so insufficiently thankful England; and this event *may* be the first judgment.

The Queen's grief is perfectly natural, womanly, and gentle; *so deep*! It has been a heart wound. Never was there more tender love, nor so incessant a performance of every conjugal duty. The blank will be more and more felt. May she be led to more and more reliance and submission. Hitherto her excellent health has not suffered. I have heard nothing of the Princess of Prussia; I hope she is only taking care of another expected baby. Her sorrow will be very great. She so affectionately loved her father. . . .

The Dowager Lady Lyttelton to the Dowager Lady Spencer.

STRATTON STREET, November 28, 1868.

. . . An event took place here yesterday which I must state. I had a visit from the Crown Princess and her husband! It was announced by a note from Lady Caroline Barrington Thursday night; and they arrived just as she foretold, between four and five o'clock. You may fancy it put us into a considerable fuss. How to receive her (for *his* coming was not foretold), whether a red carpet at the entrance, etc., etc., etc. However, all went off well. Her own manner, and his, were charming—so sensible and affectionate to me. Caroline went to the house-door to receive her, as my crawling up the narrow stairs would have been an evil; and I stood at the top of the stairs, where

I was embraced, and they came in, and sat some time full of kindness and simplicity. She saw the chess-board open, and asked who played. I told her "Caroline and Kitty." "Oh, Kitty! I am so glad to see you! But no curls, I see! The curls are gone!" On my wondering she should remember the curls, she said: "I do remember all about her—her gowns, her aprons, and all." To Caroline she was quite confidential—talked away of old times and people, to please me. Their manner to each other was perfect, and her dear honest face looked all happiness. He was, as always, peculiarly gentlemanlike and modest—handsome, too, and grown since I saw him into a large man. . . .

This is the last letter of interest to the outside world, though she continued to write till within a fortnight of her death in March, 1870, at the age of eighty-two.

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